

Spencer fortune 'tied up in estate and family trusts'

FROM INIGO GILMORE IN CAPE TOWN

LAWYERS for Earl Spencer pleaded poverty on his behalf yesterday as he fought his estranged wife's claim for a £3.75 million divorce settlement in a Cape Town court.

His family fortune is estimated at £100 million, his personal fortune is said to be worth £6 million and he has an annual £1 million a year income, but his counsel argued that all his money was tied up in his ancestral home, Althorp in Northamptonshire, where his sister, Diana, Princess of Wales, is buried. The rest is in offshore and London family trusts.

There was laughter in Court 17 when lawyers said that the Earl owned only two houses in South Africa, their contents, a couple of trucks and a Mercedes, which was why he could only afford to offer the mother of his four children a £300,000 settlement. Nicolas

Mosyn, a lawyer introduced as an expert witness by Earl Spencer, said of the £1 million income: "It's not earned income. It derives from historic assets. The husband does not have to go out and earn an income."

Lawyers for his wife, Victoria, said that she would demand that the earl named in court the women with whom he had allegedly had affairs during their marriage. In addition, Countess Spencer is insisting that he give specific dates for when he had sex with three women named in her divorce petition: the writer Sally Ann Lawson, his current companion, South African model Josie Borain, and fashion designer Chantal Collopy, who is to give evidence for Lady Spencer.

Lady Spencer, dressed in a navy blue jacket and red knee length dress, appeared to be

enjoying the legal jousts on the third day of the hearing. By contrast the earl, in a dark suit, looked morose as he sat at the opposite end of a bench.

Claims about his poverty because of inheritance tax and the expense of catering for a large number of visitors to Althorp were scorned by Jeremy Posnansky, QC, who told the court: "It is surprisingly common that when a divorce court approaches, a husband's businesses go down."

Lady Spencer is seeking either £3.75 million lump sum or £5,000 a month for each of their children. Her lawyers said that she needed a house in London and another in Northamptonshire, where she wanted her children to attend school. Viscount Louis would eventually go to Eton and the girls would become day-boarders at Rugby public school, 14 miles from Althorp.

Her barrister, Jeremy Gauntlett, told the court that she might choose to buy a "piet-a-terre" in London and a "not so nice" house in Northamptonshire with any settlement money. Lady Spencer, 32, is also suing the firm of solicitors appointed for her by Earl Spencer in the early stages of the divorce for alleged breach of contract.

Earl Spencer, 33, was yesterday fighting a second legal battle in Cape Town in an adjoining courtroom as he attempted to stop local news-



Lady Spencer outside court yesterday. She wants a home in London and another in Northamptonshire

papers publishing lurid details disclosed in court about his private life. He said their six-year-old daughter, Kitty, had been distressed by posters advertising the reports in *The Cape Times*.

Earl Spencer claims publication of the details would upset his children. In his affidavit to the court, the earl said: "The reporting of both *The Cape Times* and the *Cape Argus* newspapers thus far have concentrated on my alleged matrimonial misconduct and has also dealt with certain aspects of my wife's mental and physical health. [This] reporting is not in the

children. In particular our eldest daughter, Kitty, who attends a primary school in Cape Town.

"During the past weekend I spoke to Kitty and asked her whether she knew what was happening. She said she knew that we were the process of divorcing. When I asked her how she knew about this, she told me that all her friends at school were talking about the matter. I should mention that Kitty is able to read and that *The Cape Times* posters referring to Spencer's other women were displayed on many lamp-posts in the city, including those on Kitty's route to school."

South African law prevents local papers from reporting evidence given in divorce hearings. Local newspaper editors claim this is a non-issue when British and other international newspapers, which are freely on sale in South Africa, can publish evidence without hindrance.

Last night a High Court judge in Cape Town adjourned the interdict hearing brought by Earl Spencer against the two newspapers until Saturday. Lawyers for the newspapers agreed that their publications would undertake not to publish any more details about the proceedings until after a ruling at the weekend.



Earl Spencer: income of £1 million a year

Prostitute murders may be work of one man

BY SHIRLEY ENGLISH

POLICE investigating the latest murder of a prostitute in Glasgow have not ruled out the possibility that a serial killer may be responsible. Tracy Wyld, 21, a single mother, was found dead by friends at 5.30am on Monday. She is the sixth prostitute to be murdered in the city since 1991.

Detective Chief Inspector John Sherry, who is leading the murder inquiry, said: "With the history of murdered prostitutes in Strathclyde we are investigating the possibility of a link. However, at the moment there is nothing to suggest a serial killer is at work."

Ms Wyld, a drug user, was last seen alive at 3.05am at a drugs crisis centre in West Street, Glasgow. An hour earlier she had been seen leaving a dark blue Ford Escort with a smartly dressed man, aged 20-30, and walking to her top-floor flat in the Barmulloch area. The man was medium build, 5ft 9in, clean shaven with short, light brown hair, wearing dark clothes.

She did not knock on her neighbour's front door to alert her she was home. This was her only security measure. It is thought she was strangled or suffocated. Her mother said yesterday she had no idea that her daughter was a prostitute and appealed for more witnesses.

Neighbours described Ms Wyld as a well dressed, friendly young woman who lived for her two-year-old daughter. Police said she had regular clients and appealed to them to come forward before they were contacted.

It is thought she may have worked to pay for her drug habit. Detectives also want to interview a woman who fought with Ms Wyld outside her home on the evening she was killed.

Sources on the street said that Ms Wyld had worked as a prostitute for only a short time, possibly a few months. They said that many young women turned to prostitution at this time of year to pay for their children's Christmas presents.

Former mistresses vent their spleen in the press

BY DANIEL MCGRODY

EARL SPENCER had his reputation savaged yesterday by two former mistresses whom he scorned. The women, who have openly confessed to having affairs with him, accused him of being selfish, callous and mean.

Earl Spencer is understood to be furious that they have attacked him in British newspapers, particularly Chantal Collopy who is due to give evidence against him in what has become an ever more acrimonious

divorce hearing in Cape Town. He says he is determined to refute the slurs when he gives evidence in court next week.

Mrs Collopy, 37, accuses the brother of Diana, Princess of Wales of ruining her life. "Once he had won me over, he dumped me," she said. "It was as if, having got what he wanted, he just lost interest."

Sally Ann Lawson, who admits to an affair with Earl Spencer in 1990, criticised him for not agreeing to his estranged wife's financial demands which, she says, he can well

afford. "If he just made a small withdrawal from his petty cash box all this unpleasantness would be over. And for someone who dines on with such dreary regularity about media intrusion you would think it cheap at the price," she writes in an article for the *London Evening Standard*.

Miss Lawson said that the sight of his wife and jilted mistress Mrs Collopy sitting together in the Cape Town courtroom was sweet justice. She praised both women for their stand, and says: "The only way to

get any justice against such an adversary is for the sisters to do it themselves."

She describes the earl as the sort of man who makes women unite against him. "One must ask oneself what exactly it is that he does to women that sends them ... into each other's arms? The only mystifying thing about this court case isn't the sight of Victoria Spencer and Chantal Collopy united together but that Earl Spencer ever attracted women of this calibre in the first place. And, having attract-

ed them, so singularly failed to realise his good fortune and held onto them."

Both women praise Lady Spencer's physical recovery and cast her as the victim in this legal drama. Mrs Collopy, who has two children, said: "I'd always thought Victoria was the cause of the marriage problems. After he dumped me I realised that, like me, Victoria was also a victim."

She leaked a damning letter to Lady Spencer written by the earl admitting to his bullying of the

former model. British legal experts believe that if the countess does have her divorce petition heard in Britain she could easily double the £3.5 million settlement she is seeking.

Ann-Marie Hutchinson, a family law specialist with experience of South African divorce courts, said: "I know for a fact that she would get a much better deal here in terms of property and capital. I would think she could come away with £5 million to £7 million for herself - plus maintenance for the children."

PC shot at his own car 'to be liked'

BY TIM JONES

A POLICE constable blasted his own patrol car with a sawn-off shotgun because he was depressed and wanted to be liked by his colleagues, a court heard yesterday.

Michael Taylor, an officer with the Dorset force, provoked a £14,000 police anti-terrorist response when he radioed in to say he was being attacked in July last year.

At Dorchester Crown Court, Taylor, 41, a father of three, admitted possessing a shotgun while committing an offence, shortening the barrel of the gun and possessing a weapon without a firearms certificate.

Taylor, of Broadmayne, near Dorchester, was placed on probation for two years after Judge John Beasly had seen evidence which showed he had been suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder at the time caused by attending road traffic accidents involving children.

Richard Onslow, for the prosecution, told the court: "He said his motives had been that he wanted his mates to like him."

QC stopped by police refused a breath test

BY SIMON DE BRUNELLES

ONE of Britain's top criminal barristers was yesterday banned from driving for refusing to give a breath test to police. John Charles Rees, QC, who was paid more than £350,000 last year in legal aid fees alone, was followed at speed by a police van into the drive of his home.

Rees, 48, a figure well known in Cardiff legal circles, had been drinking at his local pub just 600 yards from his home when he drove back in his blue Jaguar. A police van spotted his car straddling the centre line as he drove along a country road at 11.40pm.

Nia James, for the prosecution, said: "The police van switched on its blue warning light and flashed its headlights for Rees to stop. 'Mr Rees failed to stop and was followed until he stopped at his house.'"

Constable Steven Atkinson approached Rees outside his eight-bedroom house at Old St Mellons, near Cardiff, after he stepped out of his car. The officer said Mr Rees was unsteady on his feet. "The officer could smell intoxicants on Mr Rees' breath and his speech



Rees: he had been drinking at his local

was slurred. Miss James said Rees said to the officer: 'I've had a couple of drinks down the road in the Fox.'

PC Atkinson said he had reason to believe he had alcohol on his breath and Mr Rees replied: 'Is this necessary?' Magistrates at Barry, Glamorgan, were told he refused "two or three times" to take the breath test. At one stage Rees said, "No, no I will not", when asked to take the breathalyzer test.

Russell Jenkins, for the defence, told the court: "Mr Rees had been drinking and was indignant and angry because

he had been stopped after driving properly. The police vehicle came at some speed down his drive and slewed in front of his house."

"He has been driving for 30 years and has never been in this situation before. He has never had an accident. A conviction is a matter he takes very seriously. It is a very substantial punishment because he travels many miles around the country."

Rees admitted failing to provide a specimen of breath for analysis on November 20. He was fined £800 with £30 costs and was disqualified from driving for 15 months. He asked for seven days to pay. Elizabeth Parkinson, chairman of the magistrates, told Rees: "We have given you credit for pleading guilty."

Mr Rees is listed among the top eight barristers in Britain on their earnings for criminal legal aid work. He was one of four barristers earning between £350,000 and £399,000 from legal aid in the 1995-96 financial year.

The figures were given in a letter from the Lord Chancellor's Department to a Labour MP after questions about the £1.4 billion legal aid bill.

EastEnders abortion upsets viewers

BY CAROL MIDGLEY
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

TELEVISION viewers protested to spina bifida charities yesterday after a character in *EastEnders* chose to have an abortion on discovering her unborn baby had the disease.

Viewers and charity representatives said the BBC's soap opera had presented a bleak and negative picture of the birth defect which affects one in 1,000 pregnancies in the UK each year.

In an episode of *EastEnders* screened on Tuesday night, an estimated 15 million viewers saw Bianca Bratchler, played by Patsy Palmer, decide to abort her baby after an ante-natal scan showed the child was severely physically and mentally handicapped.

Tony Britton, a spokesman for the Association for Spina



Palmer: soap baby had spina bifida

Bifida and Hydrocephalus, said about 40 callers telephoned to complain about the way the programme treated the subject. The callers, many of whom were carers for children suffering from the condition, were angered at

seeing a tearful Bianca accepting advice from her friends and family that the baby girl would "wreck her life".

"Some people have rung us to say the programme was typically negative about the disease and failed to show the range of options open to parents," Mr Britton said. "Children with disabilities can have a very good quality of life and contribute to society when they grow up." The association broadly supported the storyline for raising the profile of spina bifida.

A spokeswoman for the BBC said the programme had provoked "a number of calls - some critical, some supportive". She added: "*EastEnders* is rooted in reality, and the statistics show that 1,000 parents each year who go through this experience make the same decision as

Ricky and Bianca. The programme has earned a reputation for approaching sensitive stories in a responsible way and Ricky and Bianca's experiences were meticulously researched." She said the BBC's public information office would provide helpline numbers.

EastEnders also came under fire yesterday from the Broadcasting Standards Commission, which upheld 11 viewers' complaints about "chummy and irritating" stereotypes in three episodes set in Ireland.

After the episodes were broadcast, BBC chiefs apologised immediately and repeatedly to offended viewers and Irish people. In its submission to the commission, the BBC said it now regretted the "ill-judged" portrayal.



Saturday in
THE TIMES

metro



SHERYL CROW
on love and
loneliness



The new
comic
for kids

Writers back head on pampered children

Richard Ford and Joanna Bale report on the debate over childhood

WRITERS and children's charities last night lamented the lost freedom of childhood as parents responded to the fear of crime by sheltering youngsters from the real world.

Authors joined in the debate started yesterday by Jacqueline Lang, the headmistress of Walthamstow Hall, who criticised today's parents for being too overprotective towards their children and providing them with too much supervision. Bel Mooney, author of 17 children's books, said: "She is right in being concerned that children are not walking anywhere and are not being exposed to simple things like the weather, which is very strange and perhaps stands for other things that they are also missing out on."

"When I was a child I walked everywhere or used public transport. Nowadays children are ferried everywhere by car. You see the chaos outside schools with parents double parking because they cannot even be bothered to park up the road and walk."

Many parents are reacting to coverage of child murders and abductions which receive such publicity precisely because they remain a rarity. The latest Home Office criminal statistics for England and

Wales — which, of course, exclude the Dunblane massacre — show that the number of people under 16 known to have been killed by a stranger for which a suspect had been identified was six in 1977 and 6 in 1995.

Fears over child abduction also alarms many parents. Until 1984 it was known as "child stealing" and between 1973-1984 the figure was between 28-63 of offences a year. In 1984, the offence was reclassified as child abduction and included abduction by one parent from another. The figures rose to 275 in 1973 though remains unclear whether this was entirely a result of strangers taking children, or partly of parental abduction arising from family breakdown.

Last night Diana Lamplugh, of the Suzi Lamplugh Trust, which advises schools on safety, praised the headmistress for her outspoken remarks. She said: "She is much to be congratulated. It is a bold step."

"We feel very strongly that parents are protecting child-

ren to such an extent that they don't allow them to understand what is safe and what isn't. Safety has to be internalised and put into practice."

"It's very hard to let your children do their own thing as much as possible, but if they are not allowed to do this, then it will inevitably lead to problems."

The prize-winning children's author Michael Morpurgo, who also runs farm projects for inner-city children in Devon and Wales, said: "We can become very overprotective. The more I write and the more I work with children, the more I know that they need to see things first hand. On our farms, children have to experience both death and discomfort as well as the joys and beauties."

"Children need to get close to things to learn, but there is this clipboard mentality with education where children are given only a brief look at things."

Mr Morpurgo added: "Children need difficult expe-

riences. When I am writing, if I feel that the end should be tragic, then it is. That's what life is like."

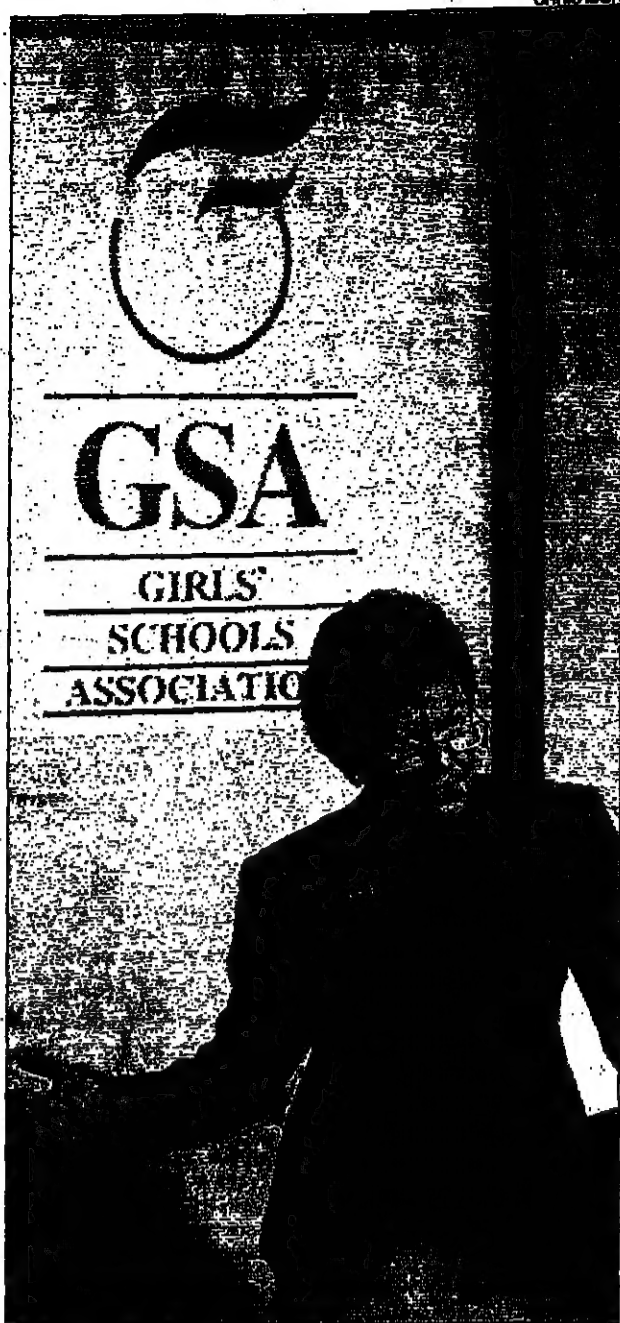
"Children are too often given a virtual-reality world with little contact with reality. It may be what we want to see and hear, but it is not real."

The loss of freedom for many children was highlighted by a A Policy Studies Institute survey in the 1990s looked at five different parts of England and compared the results with a similar survey carried out in 1971. In 1971, 80 per cent of English seven and eight-year-olds were allowed to travel to school on their own or with other children but the figure had dropped to 10 per cent by 1990.

Half as many seven and eight-year-olds were allowed to cross roads on their own compared with 1971. In 1971 53 per cent of English nine-year-olds were allowed to travel independently by bus compared with 8 per cent by 1990.

Last night, the Children's Society defended modern parents. It said that they worried about their children in the world because they felt they were under siege from the threat of drugs and violence. "It is a delicate balance supporting their child's transition to adulthood and ensuring their safety," the society said.

When I
was a child
I walked.
Now they
are ferried
by car



Jacqueline Lang at the Girls' Schools Association

Labour offers peace to private schools

By JOHN O'LEARY
EDUCATION EDITOR

THE Government cemented a rapprochement between Labour and independent schools yesterday, providing £500,000 to establish partnerships with the state sector and promising not to take action that would threaten their charitable status.

Stephen Byers, the School Standards Minister, told the Girls' Schools Association that the "educational apartheid" created by the division between state and private schools diminished the whole system. The Government wanted to draw a line under the abolition of assisted places in independent schools and forge a new relationship.

An advisory group has been appointed, under the chairmanship of Chris Parker, the headmaster of Nottingham High School, to recommend ways in which state and independent schools can work more closely together. The Education Department has matched a £250,000 donation from the businessman Peter Lampl to fund a series of pilot projects.

Ministers' approach to independent education has become a touchstone of new Labour moderation. Schools feared that spending on the final years of the Assisted Places Scheme would be squeezed and the Charity Commission encouraged to withdraw the financial advantages on which many rely for survival.

However, Mr Byers' speech in Bristol — the first by a Labour minister to a senior independent schools' conference — reassured the sector on both counts. He told the headmistresses that the remaining assisted places would be fully funded, and added that the commissioners were reviewing all charities to assess their status, a process which could take several years and which would be "at arm's length from government". But the schools' activities appeared to justify charitable status.

Calling for old prejudices to be buried, Mr Byers said: "We need to put the past behind us, old feuds and old hostilities must be put on one side. We owe that to our children."

Jacqueline Lang, the association's president and headmistress of Walthamstow Hall, in Sevenoaks, Kent, said: "More than a hatchet, I think a great axe has been buried today. Not only is it the first time a Labour minister has come to our conference, but he is meeting us more than halfway and we should be grateful for that."

Leading Article, page 12

Nurseries hit by poor planning

By DAVID CHARLTER

SCHOOLS were yesterday told by the Government's spending watchdog to co-operate with playgroups rather than compete with them for four-year-olds.

The Audit Commission said local education authorities still had much to do to meet ministers' hopes of a nursery place for every four-year-old by September next year.

Few councils gave a second thought to private and voluntary nursery groups when they let schools grow to secure income from nursery vouchers, the commission said.

The Pre-School Learning Alliance said more than 800 playgroups were forced out of business as parents spent their £100 annual vouchers in expanded school reception classes. Vouchers were scrapped when the Government came to power in May.

The Audit Commission's review of under-five education, published yesterday, found a continued lack of planning by local authorities.

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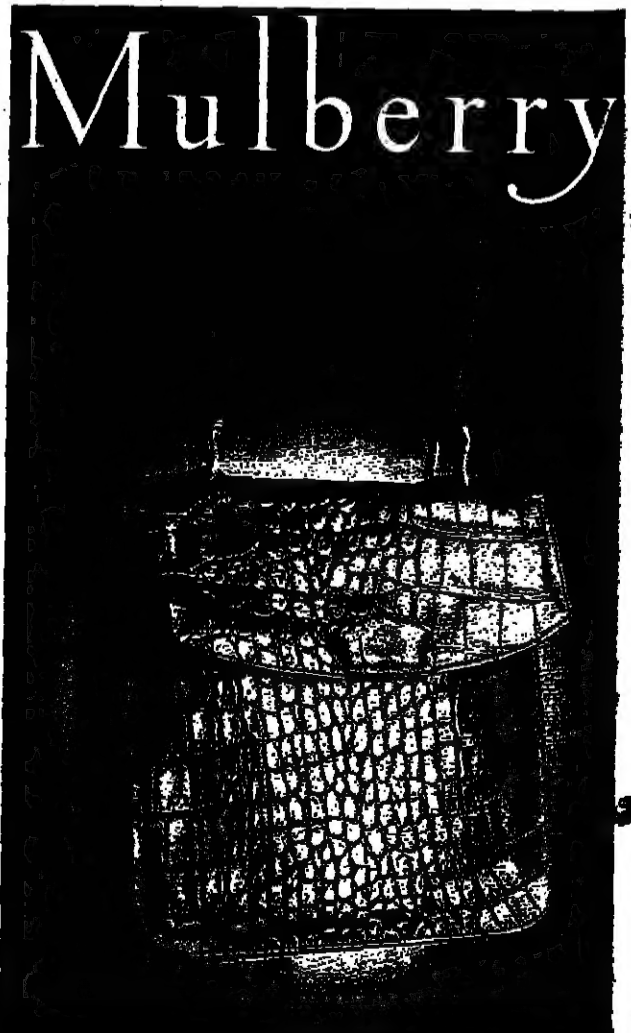
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Navy plucks £20m jumpjet from sea

A carrier crew acted quickly to save a Harrier and the pilot when it ditched into the Mediterranean during night manoeuvres, reports Michael Evans

THE Royal Navy pulled off a dramatic night-time rescue in the Mediterranean this week when it scooped an RAF pilot and his £20 million Harrier jumpjet out of the sea. The aircraft had ditched into the water off Sardinia as it manoeuvred to land on the carrier HMS *Invincible*.

The pilot was flying one of the Harrier ground attack aircraft that joined the carrier at the end of last week as part of the operational air group on standby to move to the Gulf in the event of a decision by the United Nations to mount strikes against Iraq.

The Harrier GR7, which can operate by day or night, had begun the normal hovering manoeuvre on the port side of HMS *Invincible*, before flying sideways to touch down on the flight deck, when it dropped into the water. A full emergency was launched. Crash procedures are well rehearsed, although this was the first time that an RAF Harrier operating from a carrier had had to be rescued during a landing.

Since 1994, the Navy has lost four Sea Harriers, two of them last year. One Navy Harrier ditched into the water in similar circumstances to the RAF aircraft, but was not recovered. The Navy has 26 active Sea Harriers.

During Tuesday night's rescue operation, the Harrier GR7 remained afloat for several minutes without support because the two external fuel tanks were nearly empty and the air inside provided a degree of buoyancy.

With the Harrier still resting on the surface the pilot, who was uninjured, managed

to scramble free and was picked up by one of the carrier's Sea King helicopters from 849 Squadron. However, as the plane began to sink, Captain Roy Clare, commanding HMS *Invincible*, launched a special "crash boat" — a rigid inflatable with a glass fibre hull and divers on board — to try to rescue the Harrier.

In minutes, the Navy divers succeeded in placing two flotation bags underneath the Harrier to keep it on the surface. Lifting "strops", like slings, were placed under the fuselage and eventually connected to a crane on board the carrier. As soon as the aircraft had been lifted to the flight deck, Navy crews hosed it with fresh water to remove all the salt and carried out other emergency measures to avoid the risk of corrosion.

Navy sources said they hoped the Harrier, which had been returning from a training sortie, would not have suffered irreparable damage and that it could be operational again. It was one of seven aircraft sent from No 1 Squadron, based at Wittering in Cambridgeshire, with one of them acting as a spare.

Although the accident was an embarrassment to the RAF, after the publicity given to the deployment of the Harrier GR7s to Gibraltar, where HMS *Invincible* was based last week, the instant rescue was being hailed as a classic operation. Aircraft that ditch into the sea are sometimes salvaged but are seldom fit for duty again.

The cost of repairing the Harrier will depend on the damage assessment made by the engineers, a Navy



The Harrier GR7s arriving on HMS *Invincible* last week. They are on standby to move to the Gulf if the UN orders air strikes against Iraq

spokesman said. If, after drying out the aircraft, it is discovered that serious damage has been done to the avionics, engine and other parts, it may have to be returned to the manufacturer for a comprehensive rebuild.

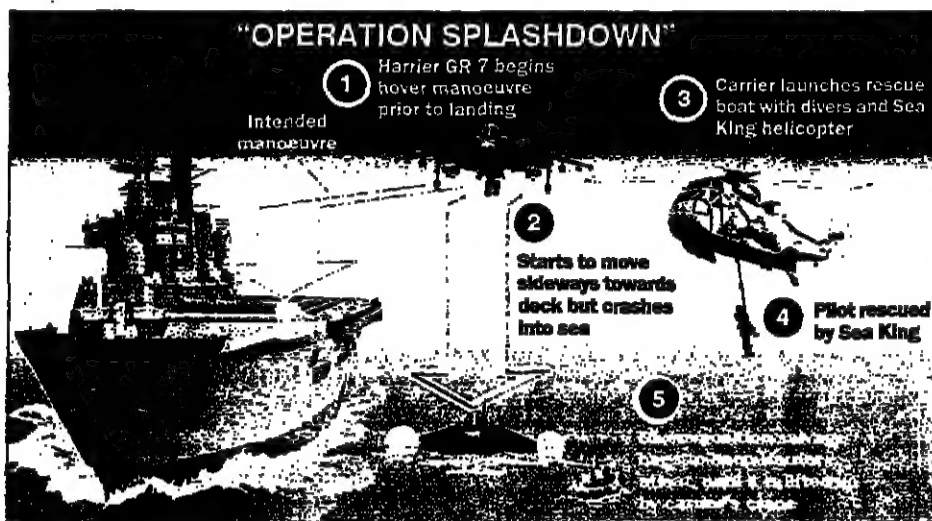
The incident occurred while the carrier was sailing in deep water. If there had been any delay in the rescue the Harrier, which weighs more than 15,000lb, would have sunk to the bottom.

Three other Harriers were airborne at the time, two of which were diverted to Cagliari in Sardinia while the emergency was being dealt with. The fourth aircraft touched down safely on the carrier.

George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, who visited HMS *Invincible* on Monday, praised the efficient rescue operation. "I am delighted that the pilot was unharmed and that the whole incident was dealt with so quickly," he said. A board of inquiry has been set up.

An RAF engineer has been killed in a mid-air collision between two light aircraft near San Diego, California.

Senior Aircraftman Mark Francis, 27, was on holiday, taking a civilian pilot training programme. He was thought to have been flying solo. Senior Aircraftman Francis, who was single, was based at RAF Akrotiri in Cyprus.



Atom test claimants granted European hearing

By MICHAEL EVANS

THREE veterans of British atomic bomb tests who claim that radiation fallout affected their health took their case to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg yesterday.

The tests were held in the Pacific and Australia in the 1950s. Supported by more than 100 other veterans, the litigants included the daughter of an RAF airman who took part in the nuclear bomb test on Christmas Island. She suffered from leukaemia as a child and is claiming £2 million damages from the Ministry of Defence, which is denying any link between the atomic explosions and subsequent cancers.

The European court has taken up the case after concern was shown by the European Commission of Human Rights that in pursuing their claim against the MoD, the veterans had inadequate access to the radiation records at the time of the tests.

Although the case in Strasbourg relates solely to the access to records, the veterans hope that a ruling in their favour will help them to claim compensation from the MoD.

Ken McGinley, chairman of the British Nuclear Tests Veterans' Association and one of the three seeking damages against the MoD, said the Labour Party in opposition had pledged "to support us wholeheartedly. But now that the Labour Party is in power, it has made it clear it is going to fight us all the way."

Yesterday the MoD said that two independent reports had already concluded that the atmospheric nuclear bomb tests had not had a "detectable effect on the participants' expectation of life nor on their developing cancer or other fatal diseases".

The inquiries were held by the National Radiological Protection Board, first in 1988 and then in 1993, assisted by representatives of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund, including Sir Richard Doll, a world authority on cancer.

The MoD's case is that the "vast majority" of the thousands of servicemen who took part in the bomb tests were too far away to be affected by ionising radiation or fallout.

The European Court of Human Rights will rule on whether the veterans had access to the relevant radiation records and therefore had a fair hearing when they applied for war pensions from the Pensions Appeal Tribunal.

The judgment is expected in March. Mr McGinley said: "The evidence we have will carry us through to victory."

New squad will take on illegal immigration racketeers

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT



O'Brien: gangs are making vast profits

A SQUAD of immigration officers and police is being set up to tackle illegal entry rackets organised by the Russian mafia and Chinese gangs. Its aim is to track down and arrest the ringleaders.

Illegal immigration has now become such a sophisticated crime that racketeers offer package deals that include forged travel documents, tickets, up to three attempts at being smuggled into Britain, and access to legal advice on the immigrants' arrival.

Mike O'Brien, the Immigration Minister, said: "There is increasing evidence that organised crime is behind much of illegal immigration. Vast profits are being made. It

is becoming a big business to bring people into Britain and other European countries."

He told a press conference at the headquarters of the National Criminal Intelligence Service, which will spearhead the operation: "There is increasing evidence that criminal organisations that have previously seen opportunities in drugs and prostitution now see new opportunities in illegal immigration."

"We have got evidence that those who have been trafficking in heroin are now trafficking in people because of the profits there are to be made."

Mr O'Brien said that there was evidence that the Russian mafia, Chinese gangs, and Nigerian criminals were now

ROMANIAN FAMILY OF 22 HELD

TWENTY-TWO members of a Romanian family who had been smuggled into Britain in a lorry were yesterday questioned at two police stations after being found wandering by the side of the road. The family, including a five-month-old baby and ten other children, were spotted by police climbing from the lorry at 3.30am at West Thurrock, Essex, a mile from the M25.

The adults were being questioned by immigration officials before being moved from Rayleigh and Grays police stations to temporary accommodation. It is believed their lorry had arrived on a ship at Purfleet, Essex.

Involved in running illegal immigration rackets. He disclosed that illegal immigrants were paying \$4,000 (about £2,400) for one Eurostar ticket while the price of complete illegal immigration deals ranged from £3,000

to £10,000 per person. Chinese people are paying \$30,000 for a package to enter the United States illegally. The immigration service said that there was increasing trade in stolen or forged European Union travel docu-

ments, with racketeers using Belgian passports and Italian identity documents in 1996, and Dutch national passports this year. Most of the recent trafficking in illegal immigrants has involved people from China, Turkey and the Indian sub-continent.

Once in this country, illegal immigrants find themselves forced into prostitution or low-paid work such as crop-picking. Gangmasters who supply labour to farmers receive up to £4 an hour for hiring out the illegal immigrants but the immigrants themselves often get just £1.20. At present, the immigration service targets the gangmaster rather than the farmer.

Last year, evidence in a court case in central London disclosed the links between or-

ganised immigration and prostitution. Brazilian women were brought to London to work as escort girls, arriving on forged Portuguese identity cards, and were installed in properties in central London. The man behind the racket is believed to have made £5 million over eight years.

The organised immigration crime section, based at the headquarters of the National Criminal Intelligence Service in Vauxhall, South London, will be able to draw on the resources of the police, immigration service and M15 and M16. John Abbott, Director-General of NCIS, said that it would aim to provide "timely and operable" intelligence to police and immigration officers on the ground to enable them to move against the racketeers.

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Campaigners

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Anti-hunt MPs see their quarry on the horizon

By Philip Webster, Political Editor

LABOUR MPs will turn out at Westminster in their hundreds tomorrow to vote for a Bill that has virtually no chance of becoming law. But those who stay on at the Commons to back Michael Foster's attempt to outlaw hunting with dogs, rather than beginning their constituency weekend, can expect their best signal yet that victory could be only two years away.

The most keenly attended speaker in tomorrow's passion-filled debate will not be Mr Foster, the MP for Worcester, whose Private Member's Bill will be under consideration, but George Howarth, a junior Home Office Minister. Mr Howarth will drop a broad hint that if Mr Foster's Bill fails — which it surely will — because the Government cannot afford to give it time — other legislative opportunities could arise in the next session of Parliament.

His message will be that if his boss Jack Straw is fortunate enough to win a slot in the parliamentary timetable beginning next autumn for a Criminal Justice Bill, it will not be impossible to amend it with a proposal to ban hunting.

Such a move would signal the end of the fight by pro-hunting campaigners to save their centuries-old pursuit — because for the first time a

government would be committed to forcing through an anti-hunting measure. If Mr Straw did not want to lose his whole Bill he would take on Tory opposition, particularly in the Lords, to force it through. Labour's anti-hunting MPs are unhappy with the way the Government has handled the issue. Those who felt that the party had, in Opposition, given an implicit promise of parliamentary time in government have spoken of betrayal. But in recent weeks that mood has given way to optimism — encouraged by nods and winks to the leading campaigners — that ministers now accept that the clear majority in the country and the Commons for a ban must be respected.

Many ministers wish that Tony Blair would put an end to all the doubts by announcing categorically that Labour will ensure, one way or another, that hunting is banned during the present Parliament. That way, they believe, he will recover the credit that has been eroded because of an impression of vacillation on the subject.

There are even some MPs who still harbour the hope that Mr Blair will order an about-turn and tell the business managers, even at this late stage, to help the Foster

Bill through. Because there are no signs of either eventuality at the moment, anti-hunt MPs are being urged to turn up tomorrow to ensure the biggest possible majority for the Bill. The Government has too much on its plate for the remainder of this session to be able seriously to countenance help for Mr Foster.

The last defence of hunting, therefore, will be mounted in the House of Lords, almost certainly during 1999.

At that time the hereditary peerage — which includes 326 Tories and 205 crossbenchers — will be close to ejection from the Upper House. A Bill to strip them of their voting rights is expected in the 1998-99 session as well.

The Government might use the opposition of peers to a ban on hunting as further ammunition for their decision to emasculate the hereditaries.

But for the anti-hunting peer there will be nothing to lose. What better for their last hurrah than a stand-up fight in support of a pursuit loved by many? A senior Conservative peer said this week that many of them would "go to the wire and die for a fine cause". Yet with the weight of the Labour Government trained on them it would be a battle that in the end they must lose.



Labour MP Dan Norris, with his mount Dolly, enjoyed his 20 minutes with the Mendip Hunt but says he will still vote to ban it on Friday

Anti MP on a fact-finding slow foxtrot

By Simon de Bruxelles

FOG shrouded the eastern flanks of the Mendips as Dan Norris, MP for Wansdyke, and his pony Dolly trailed slowly up the hillside in the paw prints of the local foxhounds.

The Labour member's attempt to find out more about hunting in advance of Friday's vote on a Bill to ban it had not got off to a good start.

First his red Ford Sierra broke down and he arrived in the field above the village of Westbury-sub-Mendip on the borrowed white mare half an hour late.

A hunt follower pointed out the red-

jacketed riders disappearing over the skyline and Mr Norris set off in pursuit at something less than walking pace. "What's he think he's doing, hunting snails?", someone sneered.

Then he had to turn around in order to get back to the House for urgent parliamentary business. Time in the saddle: less than 20 minutes.

The cynics pointed out that what Mr Norris missed in first-hand experience, he more than made up for in photo opportunity. But most were prepared to give the MP credit for at least accepting their invitation to ride with the hounds and find out exactly what it is he hopes to ban.

The Mendip Hunt, which has chased foxes across the windswept Somerset hills since 1760, will soon reach the end of the trail if Mr Norris has his way. He intends to vote in favour of Michael Foster's private member's Bill banning hunting with hounds because, he says, that is what the majority of his constituents want.

Mr Norris, 37, a Quaker who entered Parliament at the last election, said: "Is it civilised behaviour, at the end of the 20th century, to pursue wild animals with hounds? I don't think it is and I'm voting accordingly."

But as he followed the hounds, Mr Norris seemed to catch some of the

fervour of the hunt. He said: "I had never been on a hunt before and I can now understand the attraction. I was only there a few minutes but I saw a fox. Many people don't see a fox all day. The hunt is full of pageantry and history and it's very exciting to be riding in the countryside. But I will still vote against fox hunting on Friday."

Chris Payne, joint master of the Mendip fox hounds, said if the hunt were forced to close several jobs would go and the hounds would have to be put down. He added: "We came out here for a spot of hunting not to arrange a PR exercise for Mr Norris."

Campaigners exchange accusations of propaganda trickery

By Michael Horsey, Countryside Correspondent



The disputed pile of antlers

SUPPORTERS and opponents of hunting accused each other of chicanery and misrepresentation yesterday as they used advertising barges on the Thames to get their message to MPs preparing to vote on Michael Foster's Private Member's Bill.

A barge with the slogan "73 per cent say ban hunting" (based on an opinion poll) appeared opposite Parliament on behalf of the Campaign for the Protection of Hunted Animals. Their opponents, the Countryside Alliance, have hired a barge which

will appear today, displaying the slogan "The Countryside says NO to Foster's Bill".

The anti-hunting campaign, a coalition of the RSPCA, the League Against Cruel Sports and the International Fund for Animal Welfare, is estimated to have spent up to £2 million on newspaper advertisements and posters. The Countryside Alliance admits to spending £135,000 on newspaper advertisements and posters; their barge will cost a further £10,000.

Huntmen yesterday accused the RSPCA of misleading the public with a newspaper advertisement that appeared this

month showing a disembowelled fox and suggesting that hounds normally kill their prey in this way. The RSPCA stood by the advertisement yesterday. A spokeswoman said: "We believe we can substantiate all our claims, which are fully researched by our wildlife department and by independent academics."

John Pugsley, of the Dulverton West hunt in Devon, which killed the fox in the picture, said: "The fox had gone to ground and was dug out by barrows and shot cleanly with a humane killer, a pistol, before being thrown to the hounds. If hounds kill, they do it by a bite to the back of the neck

in a few seconds and not by disembowelling."

There was also controversy over a photograph that appeared on the front page of a newspaper this week purporting to show a pile of antlers from stags shot recently by farmers in the West Country. It was offered as evidence that farmers, fearing damage to their crops, had been shooting far more deer than usual after the refusal of the National Trust and the Forestry Commission to renew deer-hunting licences on Exmoor and in the Quantock Hills.

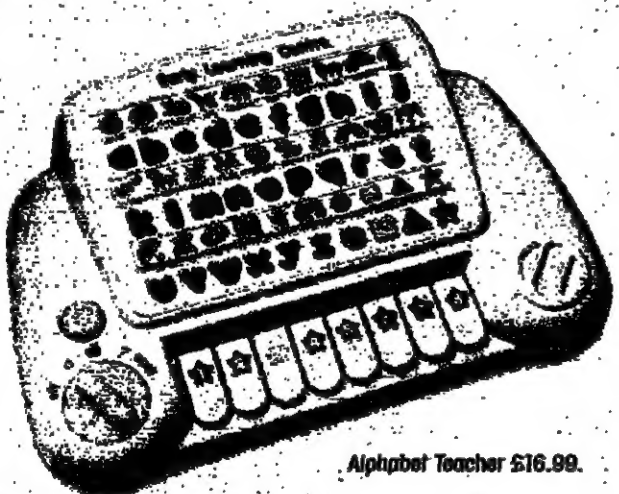
Kevin Saunders, of the League Against Cruel Sports, said: "It

looks as if this story has been put about by pro-hunt farmers, to show what will happen to deer if hunting is banned. I would not put it past some farmers to shoot more deer to spite the National Trust, but if you look at the picture, it appears that some of the antlers are quite old, and not from deer shot recently."

Robert Rowe, a farmer who hunts with the Quantock Stag-hounds, said he could not vouch for the truth of the picture, and had not shot any deer himself, but believed that up to 80 stags had been shot since September, compared with about ten over the same period in recent years.



The RSPCA advert's savaged fox



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General Synod

First-round win to streamline Church executive

By Ruth Gledhill, Religion Correspondent

REFORMERS who want the size of the General Synod of the Church of England reduced by a third and layers of bureaucracy abolished yesterday cleared the first hurdle to their plans becoming law.

After a debate at Church House, Westminster, the synod voted narrowly to "take note" of the report of a four-year review chaired by Lord Bridge of Harwich. The proposals, described by Canon Hugh Wilcox, of St Albans, as a "gadarene rush to turn the Church of England into the religious division of McDonalds or the National Health Service", include a recommendation to reduce the 570-strong synod to 390 members.

The report proposes abolishing the historic convocations of Canterbury and York, the bodies which preceded the synod as a form of church government and can still debate contentious issues. The Archbishop of York, Dr David Hope, was among those who expressed concern at such a move. The report also recommends removing deanery synods from the electoral process

for the synod, in effect consigning them to oblivion.

Attempts to have the report thrown out yesterday were unsuccessful, and it is now likely to be debated throughout the Church, which is already making changes to the way it is governed by setting up a central, policy-making "Archbishops' Council". Eventually, it could return to the synod in some form of legislation.

Dr Hope said that the elimination of the convocations of Canterbury and York would diminish the separate influence of the two provinces. "If we are really seeking some direction for our future, then we must be careful to propose some sense of continuity with our past," he said.

Canon Wilcox, vicar of St Mary the Virgin, Ware, Hertfordshire, said that some people had no sense of history and wanted to remove anything which spoke of the past. "We must reject these destructive impulses which are so out of touch with feeling in both Church and nation about the need to hear and respect regional sensitivities, to give

place to minorities, to be faithful to tradition."

The proposals were "unsound, unacceptable and untimely", he said. "High on the list of God's gracious gifts to the Church of England are its parish clergy, its laity, its diversity, its history and its traditions. This unacceptable report is an attack on all of them," he said. "What is proposed would lead to church government which would give more power to the centre and less to the parishes. Parish priests, archdeacons and deans would have to fight for seats in a rump of a synod which will lack authority because it will be neither representative nor comprehensive."

But Canon Bob Baker, a member of the review body, said the principles of synodical government were widely accepted. "But there is scope for improvement and we believe that it is time for some reform of the system. . . A smaller synod will encourage more effective representation, as well as having benefit in terms of cost, demands on time and ease of organisation."



Caroline Williams with the 52-year-old pet bequeathed by Donald Moss, her village neighbour, below

Tortoise owner shells out £50,000 legacy for its care

By Tim Jones

A TORTOISE called Big Tibby will never want for lettuce after its millionaire owner left a neighbour £50,000 to look after the 52-year-old pet, together with Billy, a cocker spaniel.

Donald Moss left the money and the animals to Caroline Williams, whose kindness meant that his fear of ending his days in a home was not realised. For the last

few years of his life, Mr Moss was virtually housebound. However, he was able to remain at home in Butley Town, Cheshire, because Mrs Williams and her family in the cottage next door cared for him, cleaned his home, did his shopping and ensured he was never alone.

Yesterday, Mrs Williams described Mr Moss, who was 80, as a perfect gentleman. She said: "He used to dress every day in his tie, waistcoat

and suit. He was a very kind man who did not have a harsh word for anyone. I loved him very much."

Mr Moss provided legacies for her husband, David, and their daughter, Emily, 20. Mr Williams will inherit a prized shotgun while Emily, who is reading classics at Cambridge, has been left a paddock that is home for a pet sheep, a tame fowl and exotic birds.

Mr Moss named the tor-



oise after a street in Manchester. He made his fortune as the director of a Stockport company founded by his father to make mattresses. Most of his estate goes to family members.

Wild mink devour Scottish seabirds

By Nick Nuttall

WILD mink are killing more than half the seabirds on the west coast of Scotland, according to a new study. The finding challenges assertions by some scientists that the mink, a native of North America that has escaped from fur farms, has little or no effect on British wildlife.

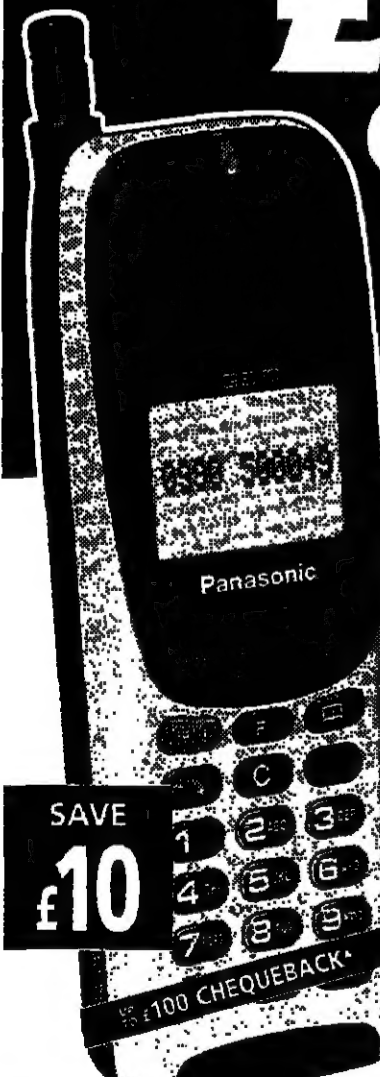
Clive Craik, a biologist with the Scottish Association for Marine Science at Dumfries, near Oban, claims mink are behind a fall in the population of common terns along 1,000 kilometres of coastline between Mallaig and Campbeltown. *New Scientist* magazine reports his findings that over the past ten years, the number of breeding pairs has fallen from 1,839 to 1,025. The number of breeding pairs of common gulls in the area has dropped from 1,138 to 799 and black-headed gulls from 630 to 303 since 1989.

Mr Craik says that populations of these species have increased slightly at sites where mink are absent but have declined sharply at the sites where mink, which eat chicks and eggs and have no natural predators, are found.

The researcher also notes that on 15 mink-infested inshore islands, seabird numbers have fallen by more than 90 per cent. In some cases colonies have failed to breed or have disappeared.

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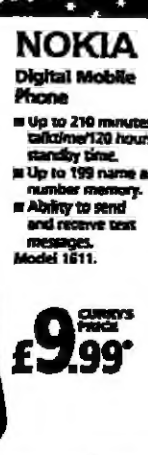


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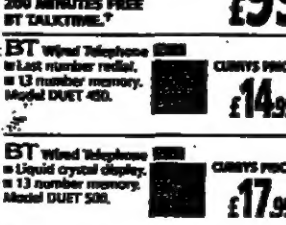
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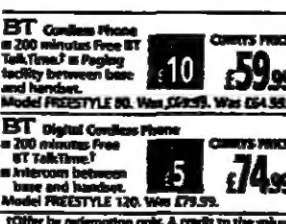
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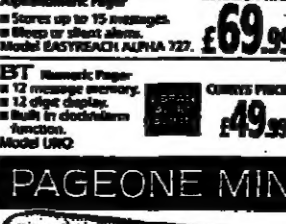
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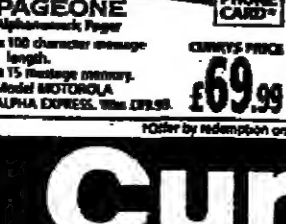
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Dinosaur tails used to whip up passion

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

COMPUTERS have helped to prove that male dinosaurs were able to woo their partners and intimidate rivals by cracking their long tails like bullwhips.

The claim, first put forward by Professor R. McNeill Alexander of Leeds University, has been followed up by Nathan Myhrvold, from the software company Microsoft, who used computers to simulate the tails of the giant sauropods and show the feat was possible.

Using a bullwhip bought from a supplier in Seattle, Dr Myhrvold used his computer to confirm that a wave generated at the base of a dinosaur's 40ft tail could exceed the speed of sound by the time it reached

the tip, producing, in effect, a miniature sonic boom. He studied the tails of eight fossil sauropods and found that the tail vertebrae were longest about a quarter of the way down, a known site of strain in a whip. Half the fossils had fused vertebrae at this point, which can result from an injury.

He believes that the fossils were males, who whipped up a frenzy with their tails in displays of sexual availability or aggression. "Males whipped their tails to get a date," he told *New Scientist*.

Professor Alexander said: "I put the idea forward with my tongue in my cheek, but I'm delighted it is possible."

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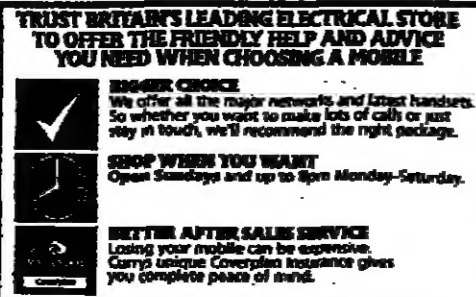
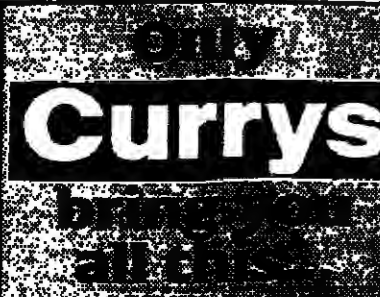
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Labour MPs tell minister to save threatened pits

The Government is accused of doing too little, too late to save coal industry, Polly Newton reports

THE Government faced criticism from its own backbenchers yesterday for doing too little to protect Britain's coal mines.

During a Commons debate on the mining industry, John Battle, the Energy Minister, was urged by his own side to prevent further pit closures. He was accused by one Labour MP of failing to state clearly the Government's policy.

About 5,000 jobs in the coal industry are under threat as RJB Mining, the country's principal mine operator, prepares to close up to ten pits because of a shrinking market for its coal. A deal announced yesterday to supply 18 million tonnes to National Power over three years from March is not expected to stop the closures.

Mr Battle, replying for the Government at the end of the debate, ruled out any state subsidy for RJB. However, he announced an investigation into gas supply contracts which force power generators to use gas even when it might be cheaper for them to burn coal.

"If there is a distortion to competition here... I want to see it put right quickly," Mr Battle said. "Our primary aim is to ensure that the mining industry and coal can play an important part in our energy supplies as we move into the next century."

Calls for government action were led by Paddy Tipping, Labour MP for Sherwood, who said that many hard-working miners faced another Christmas and new year of uncertainty. Mr Tipping, parliamentary aide to the Home Secretary, said the Government should ensure that the coal industry survived and prospered. He said he accepted that there was little

that could be done in the short term.

"I am surprised that people should expect a new Labour Government to offer subsidies to the private sector," he said. But he added that there were decisions that could be taken now to protect the long-term future of the industry, such as a three-year ban on the building of gas-fuelled power stations.

Without the right action now, he said, "we could see the final demise of the coal industry, and we will be dependent eventually on nuclear and renewable energy and gas".

Mr Tipping — who as a parliamentary private secretary is expected to be fully

NATIONAL POWER SIGNS COAL DEAL

Britain's biggest independent coal producer, RJB Mining, yesterday signed a deal to sell National Power up to 18 million tonnes of coal over the next three years. The deal ends months of uncertainty for the company, which is now likely to announce before Christmas the closure of between eight and ten pits, involving the loss of up to 5,000 jobs, unless the Government alters the prospects for the coal industry.

The Government, which will next week face a Trade and Industry Select Committee inquiry into the future of coal, yesterday began an investigation into take-or-pay gas contracts for smaller generators. The contracts mean that they cannot resell gas even if that is more profitable than burning it to produce electricity.

supportive of the Government — said that people would not invest in coal unless they knew the Government's policy. He told Mr Battle: "I wish you would say more clearly, more loudly, what you are doing. I don't think your voice is being heard in the coalfield communities."

Eric Clarke (Lab, Midlothian), a former miner, said: "Our children and our children's children will not thank us if we don't deal with the problem now."

Kevin Barron (Lab, Rother Valley), also a former miner, criticised the Government for giving the go-ahead to more gas-fired power stations. "I have to say to you, we did say in opposition that we would not license new gas-fired power stations."

Denis Murphy (Lab, Wansbeck), said that the Tories' privatisation of the mines was the root of the problem. "Asking RJB to look after your coal-mining industry is like asking Imelda Marcos to look after your shoe shop. You should expect it to be stripped bare by the time you get it back."

Michael Fallon, Shadow Trade and Industry Minister, said that Mr Battle was concerned only about his own public relations. "He is happy to see 5,000 jobs disappear before the end of this financial year, provided it's done in an orderly way."

He said Mr Battle was presiding over the rundown of the collieries. "If we don't get some action today, this will be the first in a whole series of debates about closure after closure." He told him: "If you have got any credibility left, it is time now for you to announce to the House that you have a clear policy."

Job losses, page 25



Yvette Cooper: divided loyalties for the MP of a Yorkshire mining constituency

Blairite forced to dig in

By NICHOLAS WATT

A RISING new Labour star who swept to victory in a coalmining constituency in the heartlands of Arthur Scargill's NUM has found herself in the uncomfortable position of criticising the Government for failing to do enough to save the industry.

Yvette Cooper, 28, has had to respond to growing anger in her Yorkshire constituency by placing the interests of her electors above her Blairite instincts to toe the party line.

As scores of miners, including a delegation from the

Prince of Wales colliery in her Fosseftract and Castleford constituency, descended on Parliament on Tuesday to lobby MPs, Ms Cooper called for greater government action to save thousands of mining jobs at risk.

In a series of interviews she said: "These are privatised companies but the Government has to make sure there is a level playing field. It is a good, competitive industry and we must look at the future, ten or 20 years down the line." Ms Cooper, 28, spoke out after John Battle, the Energy Minister, admitted

that the Government was powerless to intervene.

Friends of Ms Cooper, a former economics journalist who is highly regarded by the Labour leadership, joked on Tuesday night that she felt so guilty for criticising the Government that she then lavished praise on the Chancellor's Pre-Budget Report. On the same afternoon as the miners' lobby, Ms Cooper described Gordon Brown's statement as "wonderful". Her support for Mr Brown no doubt delighted her fiancé, Ed Balls, who is the Chancellor's closest adviser.

TV consumer show invaded Field's privacy

By CAROL MIDDLEY, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

THE BBC consumer programme *Watchdog* has been reprimanded after it secretly filmed a group of MPs on a £40,000 "jaunt" to Chile.

The Broadcasting Standards Commission fully upheld a complaint from Frank Field, the Social Security Minister, who said his, and his colleagues', privacy had been invaded by *Watchdog* cameramen in Santiago.

In its report, the commission said viewers may have been left with the impression that the members of the Social Security Select Committee were on a junket when in fact "Watchdog found the MPs to be hard working and found no evidence that the visit was a waste of taxpayers' money". They had visited Chile on a fact finding mission to discover how the country's pensions system works.

The programme, presented by Anne Robinson, followed the MPs in September last year to question whether the trip was justified. It secretly filmed them at Heathrow airport, on board the plane, in their hotel lobby and on the streets of Santiago.

Mr Field, who was chairman of the select committee at the time, said it was the BBC that was wasting "public money by following the MPs in the first place at the licence payers' expense".

The commission accepted that it was legitimate for programme makers to investigate the use of public funds but said this particular inquiry was "ill-conceived" and formed an unfair impression that the MPs were enjoying a jaunt at the public's expense.

The adverse impression was compounded by the commentary, and the item's substitution of a light-hearted tone for research and serious inquiry did little to mitigate the unfairness, the report said. It added that MPs engaged on public business would normally be prepared to accept reasonable public scrutiny. "But the secret film-

ing by *Watchdog* on at least four occasions did infringe the privacy of Mr Field and his colleagues on the select committee. Since the film exposed no wrong-doing, and there was no reason to suppose that it would do so, the infringement of privacy was unwarranted."

A spokesman for Mr Field, said: "He is glad and very reassured that the commission has upheld his complaint in full about the unfair and unwarranted infringement of privacy."

Chile was the first country in the world to abandon the "pay as you go" state pension in favour of a private and funded system. Introduced by the military dictatorship in 1981, the scheme resulted in higher pensions, lower unemployment and faster economic growth.

Individual workers are required to put aside a minimum of 10 per cent of their monthly salaries into a capital account of their choice.

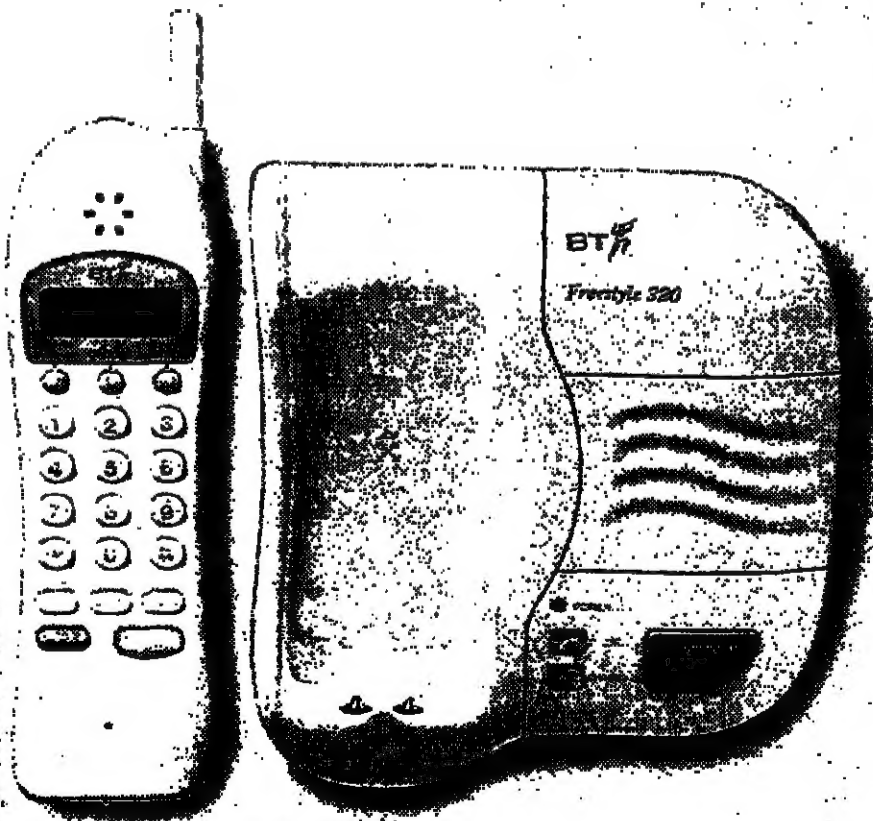
Last year Peter Lilley, then Social Security Secretary, studied the model with a view to installing a similar system whereby the money paid into National Insurance and Serps would be returned to the individual, who would be compelled to invest it in a private sector pension fund.



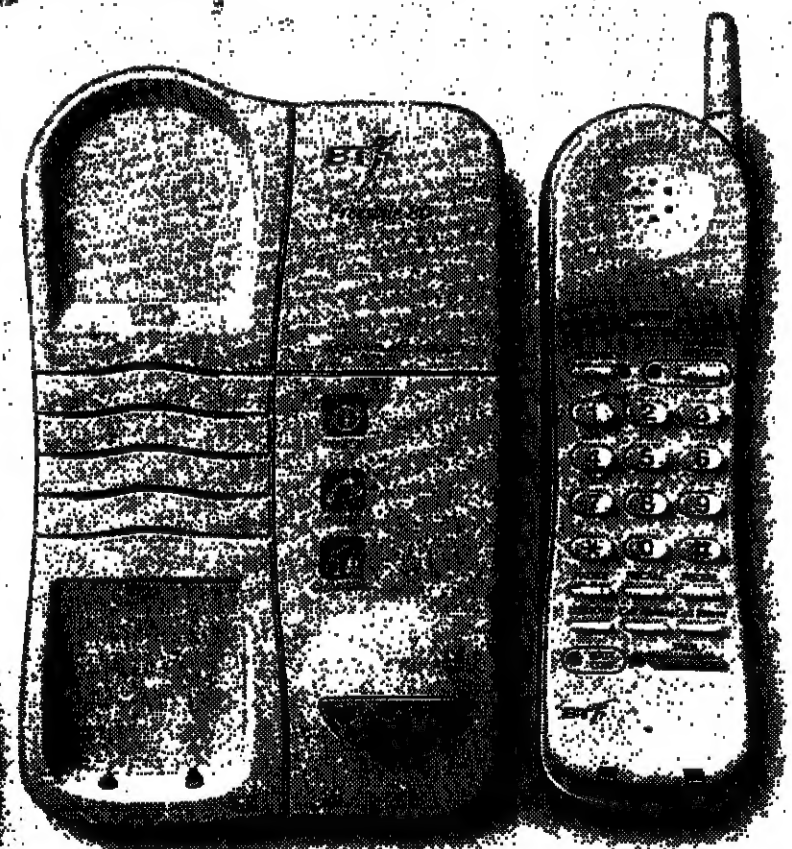
Field: accused BBC of wasting money

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BRITISH AIRWAYS

Police chief quits in Washington scandal

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

THE abrupt and painful resignation of Washington's chief of police added a new chapter yesterday to the succession of bizarre scandals among those running the beleaguered American capital.

Larry Soulesby stepped down shortly before Police Lieutenant Jeff Stowe, with whom he shared a cut-rate luxury flat, and who had been in charge of investigating extortion plots, was himself charged with extorting money from married men who frequented gay bars.

Mr Soulesby was offered condolences by Martin Barry, Washington's Mayor, who made his own contribution to the city's acute crime rate when he was filmed by FBI cameras smoking crack cocaine with a former model in a hotel room and was jailed for six months. "Chief Soulesby has been one of the best crime-fighting chiefs this city has had in a long time," Mr Barry declared.

Most support for Mr Soulesby evaporated when it emerged that Lieutenant Stowe had allegedly obtained the flat they shared for well under half the usual rent after telling the landlord the premises would be used for undercover police work. Mr Soulesby and the lieutenant were long-time friends who shared the bachelor flat while both were separated from

their wives. They shared the monthly rent of \$650 (£380). Other tenants in the block, including Janet Reno, the Attorney-General, pay between \$1,700 and \$2,500.

Mr Soulesby said he was not a party to the discount deal, but was stepping down because he could not allow yet another controversy to detract from the police department's accomplishments in fighting crime.

Lieutenant Stowe, maintaining his innocence, made a brief court appearance on charges of extortion and embezzling several thousand dollars of police funds entrusted to his care. An FBI affidavit said he had allegedly attempted to extort \$10,000 from a married man by threatening to send photos of the man at a gay bar to his wife and employer.

Mr Soulesby was promoted to chief two years ago after 24 years with the force. He took over when the police were in disarray and the department was not much better when he left. Squad cars go missing, evidence is lost and computers regularly crash. The police union described Washington as a third world war zone patrolled by a third-rate force.

Resigning, Mr Soulesby said, was like taking a 1,200lb gorilla off his shoulders. "This is the happiest day I've had in two years."



Washington police chief Larry Soulesby announcing his resignation

16,000 new HIV infections daily, UN experts say

BY MICHAEL BINYON AND BEN MACINTYRE

EVERY day about 16,000 new victims are infected with HIV, the virus that causes Aids, and by the turn of the century about 40 million people worldwide will carry the virus, according to the United Nations. One in every hundred sexually active people in the 15-49 age group has the virus.

Research published yesterday showed the number of Aids cases has been grossly underestimated. UNAids, a joint programme of UN specialised agencies, said the number of adults and children with HIV or Aids was now 30 million, a far steeper increase from last year's figure of 22.6 million than what had been previously estimated.

The report said that this was because of a more accurate way of collecting statistics, as well as an actual increase of 19 per cent in infection. In all, about 5.8 million people are believed to have acquired HIV

this year, 590,000 of them children.

But although the number of cases in the developed world is falling, the rate of infection in Third World countries, especially in Asia and Africa, is rising sharply. "We are now realising that rates of HIV transmission have been grossly underestimated, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa where the bulk of infections have been concentrated," Dr Peter Piot, executive director of UNAids, said. Of the daily new infections, more than 90 per cent are in developing countries; 1,600 are in children under the age of 15; about 14,000 are in adults, of whom more than 40 per cent are women and more than 50 per cent are aged 15-24.

An estimated 2.3 million people have died of Aids-related illnesses this year, an increase of a half over the 1996 figure. These deaths represent

a fifth of the total - 11.7 million Aids-related deaths since the beginning of the epidemic in the late 1970s. Almost half those who died this year were women and 460,000 were children.

The worst affected area is sub-Saharan Africa, where HIV cases are increasing by an alarming 7.4 per cent a year among those aged 15-49. In Botswana, the level of infection among adults appears to have doubled in five years, and in Zimbabwe the infection is as high as one in every five adults.

Dr Piot said that the transmission rate had also been "grossly underestimated" in South Africa and Nigeria.

An estimated 20.6 million people in Africa are now living with the condition, compared with six million in the Indian sub-continent and South-East Asia and 1.3 million in Latin America.

Dambusting order claimed as victory for environment

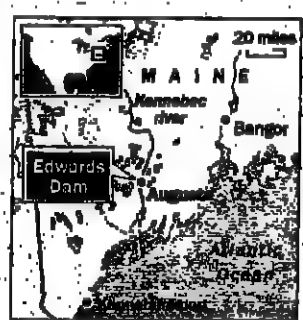
FROM IAN RHODES IN WASHINGTON

AMERICA took an unprecedented environmental step yesterday, ordering the destruction of an ageing hydroelectric dam in Maine to restore salmon, trout and other endangered fish to a 15-mile stretch of the Kennebec River.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ruled that environmental concerns - including spawning needs of salmon, trout and the endangered shortnose sturgeon - outweighed the industrial benefits of the Edwards Dam, built 16 years ago in Augusta, the state capital. The ruling was seen as a great victory for the green movement.

Although the owner, Edwards Manufacturing, plans to appeal against the decision, which ruled out any relicensing of the dam and ordered that it be torn down at the company's expense, the decision marked a sharp reversal in federal policy and may signal the start of a dambusting spree throughout the United States.

"This decision marks the first time that the commission has weighed the power produced by a dam against the value of a free-flowing river, and the river won," said Margaret Bowman, a director at American Rivers, an envi-



ronmental group based in Washington.

The dam, 40ft high and spanning 1,000ft across the Kennebec, provides one-tenth of 1 per cent of the state's electricity but blocks spawning fish from about 15 miles of river. It will now take centre stage in a heated debate pitting the value of cheap electricity against the inherent merits of a river as an undisturbed natural resource.

For more than a century Americans have been building dams with an enthusiasm rivalled only by beavers. There are now 75,000 dams in the United States, the vast majority of which are private.

The commission's decision is likely to have particular ramifications in the west, where an intense debate is continuing about the removal of large dams on the great rivers such as the Snake, the Salmon and the Colorado.

Plea by Briton's killer rejected

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

A FORMER US Marine who shot his British son-in-law dead at point-blank range has been convicted of first degree murder after a jury rejected his claim that he had suffered from post-traumatic stress syndrome since the Second World War.

Richard Keech, a model citizen for 51 years after his return from a Japanese prison camp, barely blinked as the verdict was read in a Long Beach court.

Eighteen months earlier he had gone "on autopilot", he testified, and fired five rounds into his daughter's estranged husband.

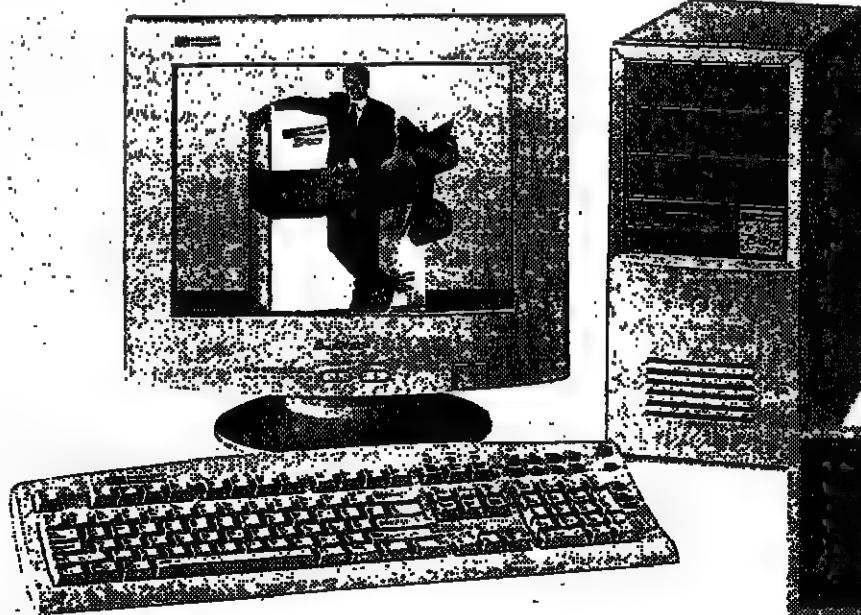
Nick Candy, a rugby-playing British business graduate, ran down the street from Keech's suburban home bleeding and screaming for help after being shot once in the abdomen, the court heard.

Using a 9 mm handgun, Keech then shot him three more times in the back and once in the base of his skull. He claimed on the witness stand to have had a flashback to the prison camp, thinking he was shooting at a Japanese guard.

The murder followed a bitter custody battle between Mr Candy and Keech's daughter, Nancy. Mr Candy had gone to the home of his father-in-law, 78, to collect his two-year-old son, Martin, for a visit, when the men began arguing out side on the pavement.

Keech, who will be sentenced in January, faces from 25 years to life in prison.

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Americans' mental problems 'mainly in the minds of their psychiatrists'

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN
IN NEW YORK

PSYCHIATRISTS, eager to lay claim to handsome reimbursements from insurance companies, are foisting scores of invented mental illnesses on ordinary Americans who are merely grappling with life's ups and downs, the authors of a new book argue.

universities in California, write: "There is a growing tendency in our society to medicalise problems that are not medical, to find psychopathology where there is only pathos, and to pretend to understand phenomena by merely giving them a label."

The authors focus their assault on the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, the "bible" of the American Psychiatric Association (APA). Its latest edition, published recently, lists

more than 300 mental syndromes. Just two decades ago, the *Manual* listed 106 disorders.

In the mid-19th century, before it was compiled, the US Government recognised only one category of mental disorder — "idiocy/insanity". How can this "proliferation of madness" be explained? The authors argue that the psychiatric profession is now in the grip of a dogma which holds that all troubles in people are the product of some "internal dysfunction". The

ascendancy of this view is linked, among other things, to a decline in the belief in individual responsibility.

This leads to patent absurdities, as can be seen in some examples of the "disorders" listed in the *Manual*. Consider these: "frotteurism" (defined as the irresistible desire to sexually touch and rub against one's fellow passengers on public transport); "fugue" (travelling in foreign lands, often under an assumed identity); "paranoid per-

sonality disorder" (the hallmark of someone who bears grudges); "hypo-active sexual desire disorder" (found in people who are not keen on sexual intercourse); and "Asperger's disorder" (the bombastic *Manual* label for shyness).

According to the APA, some 5 per cent of all Americans — about 12 million people — suffer from a condition called "generalised anxiety disorder", a statistic that delights the makers of Prozac, Xanax and beta-blockers. In fact, the

authors of *Making Us Crazy* underline the direct interest that pharmaceutical companies have in the creation of newer disorders. "For the drug companies, the unlabelled masses are a vast untapped market, the virgin Alaska oil fields of mental disorder."

But it is the insurance "payoff", above all, that fuels the "disorder industry". For psychiatrists to receive payment from health insurance companies, they must find a way of labelling their patient with

a recognised condition. That, they argue, is the reason why "attention deficiency syndrome" or "oppositional defiant disorder" is diagnosed in so many boisterous small boys. Little Johnny pulls the girls' hair in the classroom a few times, is found to have a "disorder", and is put on medication. The psychiatrist, of course, gets reimbursed by Medicaid.

□ *Making Us Crazy*, by Herb Kutchins and Stuart A. Kirk. Free Press, New York. \$27.50.



Khamenei: says critics are "enemy agents"

Iranian leader turns on rivals

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU
IN NICOSIA

IRAN'S supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, yesterday branded prominent critics who have launched an unprecedented challenge to his authority as "enemy agents" and issued a warning that they would be prosecuted.

Many are known to be followers of the moderate President, Muhammad Khatami.

Several days of orchestrated street protests in support of Ayatollah Khamenei have highlighted a power struggle between factions loyal to the conservative religious establishment and reformers keen to liberalise Iranian society.

Thousands are due to take to the streets again tomorrow, but he urged supporters to stay at home, keen to deflect the international spotlight from Tehran hosts a summit of the Islamic Conference Organisation next month, diplomats said.

Representatives from 55 countries, including 27 heads of state, are due to attend.

The conservatives' main target is Ayatollah Ali Montazeri, 75, a senior dissident who dared question the all-encompassing powers vested by the constitution in Ayatollah Khamenei.

Others have since called for the transfer of at least some of those powers to Mr Khatami, who has created a freer intellectual climate since winning a popular mandate for change in May when he swept to power.

Such ideas shake the very foundations of the Iranian theocracy.

Phone tap reveals 'creeping coup' in Kremlin

FROM RICHARD BRESTON IN MOSCOW

THE furious power struggle at the heart of Russia's Government erupted anew yesterday after evidence provided by a journalist, who died last week, suggested that a "creeping coup" had taken place at the Kremlin.

In a story that could come from a thriller, two Moscow newspapers published the latest details of Kremlin intrigue, which has cast some of the country's most powerful figures in their political careers. The latest episode emerged from an article allegedly written by an investigative journalist killed last week in a mysterious car accident.

A computer disk containing his unfinished story was passed to a colleague and with it a damning bugged telephone conversation between two of the key figures in the scandal.

On Monday, President Yeltsin sought to put an end to the crisis, caused by the disclosure two weeks ago that Anatoli Chubais, the Deputy Prime Minister in charge of reform, had accepted an inflated payment of £60,000 as an advance for a book.

Four of his allies in government were dismissed for accepting similar payments from a publishing house and Mr Chubais lost his role as Finance Minister and much of his power.

Although the facts of the case are not in dispute, what is unclear is how such a trifling matter, by the standards of Russia's hugely corrupt Government, could have had such enormous consequences.

According to Andrei Padin, the journalist who died in a collision with a parked lorry last week, the disclosure was carefully co-ordinated by a cabal of Mr Chubais's ene-

mies and released with the tacit approval of Mr Yeltsin.

Mr Padin wrote that "the clan" was brought together by Boris Berezovsky, a tycoon dismissed from his Kremlin job this month at the behest of Mr Chubais. He was said to have plotted his revenge by winning the support of Viktor Chernomyrdin, the Prime Minister, Anatoli Kulikov, the Interior Minister, Gennadi Seleznyov, the parliamentary Speaker, and Ivan Rybkin, the National Security Adviser.

On November 11, Mr Berezovsky is heard engaged in a colourful conversation with Vladimir Guzikov, a media tycoon and ally against Mr Chubais. "I am just back from the Kremlin; their position is open," Mr Berezovsky said, suggesting that Mr Yeltsin had approved his plan to expose Mr Chubais.

"Good. Where are we shooting?" asked Mr Guzikov, and the two men go on to discuss whether they should use television or newspapers to publish their material. In the event, the article appeared on November 17 and was followed by a barrage of critical commentary in newspapers and television channels controlled by the two men.

Yesterday's disclosures suggest that the power struggle is far more than simply the personal rivalry between two powerful men and ultimately could decide who rules Russia in the post-Yeltsin era.

If it is true that Mr Berezovsky has formed an alliance of figures in government and finance, he may already be laying the foundations for a challenge by Mr Chernomyrdin, the clear winner of the present Kremlin battle.

Owners strike to keep buses unsafe

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS
IN DELHI

THERE is no hell like a Delhi bus ride. Millions of commuters pour into the capital every day aboard vehicles fit for the scrapyard, often dinging to the outside or the roof. It is the world's maddest, deadliest journey to work. People die nearly every day.

But yesterday, as on the day before, there was an uncommon calm as private operators took more than 4,000 buses off the road as part of an indefinite strike for the right to use bad drivers and dangerous buses.

The strike brought a breath of sanity to India's most crowded and perilous streets. But there was chaos of another kind as six or more people squeezed into the confines of scooter rickshaws, legally limited to three passengers, to make miserable journeys. Pedal-rickshaw wallahs enjoyed a boom.

The death last week of 26 children when a speeding bus plunged off a bridge into the River Yamuna has spurred rovers to improve safety standards — long overdue but, like most things in India, ignored until there is disaster.

Not that the city government, as sluggish and polluted as the Yamuna, did anything. The Supreme Court, which is becoming increasingly activist, took on the politicians' job. It came up with some novel ideas: drivers should be qualified, and their buses should be safe.

Not only that, the vehicles should have to pass a pollution test and be fitted with speed governors. This latter concept upset the drivers, whose idea of fun is to race each other through the crowded streets, scattering all before them. Passengers emerge, bruised and dazed from this daily pummelling.

The Delhi-based Indian Foundation of Transport Research surveyed bus and lorry drivers to confirm its suspicions that most are fit to be in charge of nothing bigger than a bicycle.

Few possess even rudimen-



Delhi commuters cling to a state-owned bus during yesterday's private bus strike

tary knowledge of road safety rules; all but a few have fake driving licences; they are overwhelmingly illiterate; and many are paid "starvation" wages, rising to a maximum of 2,000 rupees (£32) a month. Pay can be as low as £16 a month.

For many, the bus or lorry is their only home. A third of long-distance drivers are not accompanied by a mate — although this is a legal requirement — and very few have had a driving lesson for any kind of vehicle.

The foundation added that the lorry drivers work in deplorable conditions, claim-

ing that their employers force them to drive overloaded and dangerous vehicles.

Many city schools have suspended classes because the strike means there are no buses. The bus operators are adamant that they cannot afford to comply with the new regulations, which would mean carrying half as many passengers and taking twice as long to do it.

On top of that, the vehicle owners would still have to pay bribes to the police, a routine practice, to avoid being delayed by a pretext.

Schools and private bus operators are considering an

appeal to the Supreme Court for more time to comply with the new orders so that the school transport system can resume. Meanwhile, millions of commuters must endure even greater hardship than usual, their misery heightened by sootings from unseasonable rain.

There were protests in several parts of the capital yesterday in support of demands for alternative transport arrangements. Meanwhile, the city authorities are trying to hire hundreds of private buses from outside Delhi, thus promising the early restoration of carnage on the roads.

WORLD SUMMARY

Leakey cleared for poll

Nairobi: Richard Leakey's opposition Safina party has been registered by the Kenyan Government for the general election next month (David Orr writes). He said a decision would be made today on whether to participate.

Dr Leakey, Safina's secretary-general, said in Nairobi yesterday: "The delay in registration has clearly been a tactic to wrong-foot the pro-democracy movement." Safina has been a thorn in the side of President Moi and his ruling Kanu party since it was founded in 1995.

Colombia votes for extradition

Bogota: Colombia's drug traffickers could face long terms in foreign jails after Congress approved a Bill that allows Colombians to be tried and sentenced abroad for the first time in six years (Victoria Burnett writes). But while the reviving of extradition was a blow to the drug industry, jailed leaders of the Cali cartel were delighted that, despite objections from America and President Samper's opponents at home, it was not retrospective.

Briton dies in air crash

El Cajon, California: A student pilot from Britain was killed when two small planes collided over a hilly, residential area east of San Diego. Mark Francis, 25, from South Wales, a mechanic with the RAF, was flying in a Cessna. It smashed through the roof of an El Cajon home after the collision. A pilot and instructor in the other plane apparently escaped injury. The house was empty. (AP)

Unita soldiers suffocate in jail

Luanda: Ten soldiers of the Unita opposition movement have died of suffocation in a container used as a temporary jail in Malanje, in government-controlled northern Angola, officials said. Unita planned the Government; and the UN monitoring mission in Angola urged the administration to investigate the deaths and publish its findings. (AFP)

Toddler survives six-floor fall

Murcia: An 18-month-old toddler who fell from a seventh-floor flat suffered only a broken tooth and bruises, hospital officials in this southern Spanish city said yesterday. State television reported that his fall was slowed by clothes lines outside lower apartments and he landed on a roof covering a patio at first-floor level. (AP)



Hutchence: "Had been drinking heavily"

Row as Hutchence family bars fans from funeral

FROM ROGER MAYNARD
IN SYDNEY

ANGRY fans were told yesterday they would not be allowed to attend the funeral of Michael Hutchence, the Australian rock star, who was found hanging in a Sydney hotel room at the weekend.

The row over the funeral gathered pace amid salacious rumours about the singer's final hours. Apart from one television crew and a couple of newspaper representatives, the media have been told that they will not be

welcome. A statement by the management company representing the Hutchence family said that they wanted a private funeral service. It added that the service, at St Andrew's Anglican Cathedral in Sydney, would be broadcast live on television.

The Very Rev Boak Jobbins, the Dean of Sydney, said, however: "I won't be forbidding fans from entering the cathedral, although there's a limit to the numbers we can accommodate." But other reports indicated that security staff would prevent all but invited mourners from attending.

Details have also emerged about the singer's last night in his suite at the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Sydney. Police sources said the singer appeared to have been drinking heavily. Empty beer bottles, cocktail glasses and a bottle of champagne were strewn around the room. The bed was stripped and the top sheet and cover were on the floor.

Although the police have emphasised that the singer was alone when he died, the last person to see him alive was Kym Wilson, a Sydney actress, who spent the early hours of

Saturday in his suite. She has told friends that the rock star showed no indication of being suicidal and had been positive in outlook. She has given a statement to police.

However, a telephone call he made to a former girlfriend suggested that he was far from happy. The singer left a distraught-sounding message on Michelle Bennett's answer machine: "It's seven o'clock. I need to talk to you. Goodnight." When she tried to contact him at the hotel, he failed to respond. Just before noon a maid found him hanging behind a door.



Wilson: last person to see rock star alive

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Police portrait of a serial killer

Photofit of Paris rapist released

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

FRENCH police yesterday released a composite portrait of a serial killer and rapist believed to have murdered at least four women in the Bastille area of east Paris in the past three years.

The release of the photofit picture, a rare move in French murder investigations, was intended to prevent the killer from striking again. However, victims' families say police were aware of the killer's appearance in 1995 and should have made the picture public months ago. The killer struck last on November 16, raping and murdering Estelle Magd, a 25-year-old secretary, in her flat near the Bastille. Last month Magali Sirotti, 19, a student, died in similar circumstances. Genetic tests have established that he is responsible for the deaths of at least three women, but have not definitively connected him to Mme Sirotti's murder.

In June 1995, the killer attacked a woman, identified only as Elisabeth O, 25, a medical student, who escaped and later gave police enough information to create the composite sketch.

Police say the murderer studied his prey, then forced his way into his victims' homes, sexually attacked them and killed them with a knife or cut-throat razor.

Gold conference will bring Nazis' secrets to light

NEXT week some of the last secrets of Hitler's Reich will be brought out of the vaults and archives of Europe and America, when Britain hosts an international conference on the wartime trade in Nazi gold.

Historians, politicians and victims from about 40 countries will investigate the murky wartime dealings of neutral countries, especially Switzerland, with Nazi Germany and try to determine what happened to the gold bars, many smelted from Jewish victims' teeth and jewellery, that were traded for Swiss francs and other neutral currencies.

Robin Cook called the conference, to be held at Lancaster House in London, immediately on becoming Foreign Secretary to clarify old accusations given fresh currency two years ago with the publication of a Foreign Office report. The gold question led to unprecedented soul-searching in Switzerland and the opening of long-dormant secret bank accounts, a boycott of Swiss banks in America and argument over how the remaining 55 tonnes of Nazi gold in Britain and America could be shared among some 350,000 surviving Holocaust victims.

Already the conference has stirred up ancient prejudices among the main participants. The Swiss, bewildered by the criticism heaped on them, are determined that the gathering should not point an accusing finger. They have prepared a detailed defence of

Talks in London will study dealings

in 'Holocaust assets', reports

Michael Binyon

their wartime conduct and, while insisting that they do not want to stir up emotions, are ready to cite evidence that America also knowingly accepted "tainted" gold after the Second World War.

Thomas Borer, the head of the Swiss task force, said his country was going to the conference "optimistic and self-confident". But he gave a warning that if it were pilloried, a popular backlash in Switzerland could scupper proposals for a huge fund to help not only Jews but all victims of oppression. This might be voted down in a referendum, although other Swiss measures, including an historical investigation and a compensation fund set up by Swiss banks, do not need popular approval. The first payment, amounting to £240, was given to an elderly Jewish woman in Riga last week.

He said the most important outcome could be an agreement by all to open the archives. Many suspect there are important, and possibly compromising, documents on the gold trade still in

Russia and the Vatican, both invited to the conference. Few of these documents will be available. The Vatican, accused of knowingly aiding the transfer of some looted assets, has sealed its records for 100 years.

The Russians are also unhappy at any extension of the gold question into argument over looted assets. They fear that will fuel demands for the return not only of art taken by the Soviet Army from German state museums but also of art now in Russia that was looted by the Nazis.

The Americans have also suddenly got cold feet. Having been vociferous in denouncing the Swiss and other neutrals, Washington has now realised, to its embarrassment, that its own post-war record opens it to attack by survivors' groups. Madeleine Albright, the Secretary of State, indicated months ago that she would attend; now she has said she is too busy and will send instead Stuart Eizenstat, an Under-Secretary of State, who has promoted investigation of the gold question.

The conference is largely the brainchild of Lord Janner, the former Labour MP and chairman of the Holocaust Educational Trust, who prompted the Foreign Office review of the gold dealings two years ago. The Tripartite Gold Commission, set up in 1946 and run by Britain, France and the United States, has distributed 98.6 per cent of the looted gold it recovered from Germany.

Pawnbroker's 'war loot' seized

FROM GABRIELLA GAMINI IN RIO DE JANEIRO

FOUR gold bars, dozens of gold teeth, antique jewellery and bundles of German marks and US dollars which were removed by Brazilian authorities from a São Paulo bank safe yesterday could be the first Nazi loot found in Brazil.

The opening of the safe at a Banco do Brasil branch in the business capital was ordered by judicial authorities after requests from Nazi-hunters who say that the fortune, which could be worth £24 million in today's money, belonged to German Jewish families.

The assets had been deposited in the safe by a reclusive German pawnbroker, who is also thought to have been a Nazi spy, during and at the end of the Second World War. Albert Blume, who is believed to have come to Brazil in 1938, died 14 years ago and was buried in a pauper's grave in São Paulo.

The wealth he had accumulated came under scrutiny when an aged aunt began a long legal battle six years ago to inherit the fortune. Nazi hunters say that Blume had acted as an agent for fleeing Nazis who transferred stolen Jewish gold to Brazil. In 1943, he set up

a pawnbroker's shop in a district of São Paulo inhabited mainly by German immigrants and allegedly took "commissions" for the loot he helped to transfer.

It seems that the opening of the safe was ordered because the Government of President Cardoso has recently encouraged an inquiry into Brazil's role as a haven for Nazis and their loot.

A commission of Jewish community leaders, lawyers and government officials has been set up to investigate long-held suspicions that millions of pounds are lying in dormant Brazilian accounts opened by fugitive Nazis.



Gold ingots in the Bank of England's vaults photographed soon after the Second World War when bullion was being shipped from Germany

Hungary wins EU pledge from Britain

FROM CHARLES BREMMER IN BUDAPEST

BRITAIN pushed its crusade for a "people's Europe" into the former Soviet bloc yesterday, promising to use its power to speed Hungary and four neighbours towards membership of the European Union.

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, said in the Hungarian parliament that Britain would use its six-month presidency of the EU, which starts in January, to give a "flying start" to negotiations to bring Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovenia and Estonia into the Union. There was no higher priority for Britain next year. "This is a momentous step and one which Britain supports absolutely," he said.

EU leaders are due to endorse "the invitation list" at their end-of-year summit next month.

Lezo Kovacs, the Hungarian Foreign Minister, told Mr Cook that the "principle danger" to the emergence of a reunited Europe was delay in the accession of the new states. Budapest was aiming to be a member of the EU by 2002, he added. The date is seen in Brussels as highly optimistic, but it fits British projections.

A striking absence from Mr Cook's 25-minute survey of Europe's future was any reference to economic and monetary union. Tony Blair's team casts its enthusiasm for expanding the EU as the natural consequence of its focus on leading Europe away from sterile debate towards "the things that matter to the people", as Mr Cook put it.

He said that these included stability, prosperity, employment, security and an "outward-looking" EU that included co-operation across the whole Continent. Four decades of communist rule were an "aberration" in Central Europe's destiny, Mr Cook said. "Having got rid of the Iron Curtain, we must make sure that we do not replace it with a Velvet Curtain, separating the haves from the have-nots."

Deadline for Bosnia arbitration

Sarajevo: Western mediators in Bosnia have given the country's leaders two weeks in which to agree to common symbols of state — including a flag, currency and passport — or face international arbitration (Tom Walker writes).

Although it is now more than two years since the Dayton peace accord, Bosnia's nationalist Muslim and Croat leaders stubbornly refuse to drop inflammatory imagery from their preferred designs on anything from banknotes to car number plates.

Carlos Westendorp, the High Representative in Bosnia, is so frustrated that he has sought extra powers which would move Bosnia along the road towards being an international protectorate.

"We want arbitration powers," said a source in Señor Westendorp's office. "Where there's an impasse and there's an obvious solution on the table, we want to come up with binding arbitration."

Although the flag is purely symbolic, the lack of a common currency, car registration system and passport impedes freedom of movement and trade.

Eurofighter flies on after Bonn parliament dogfight

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

THE Eurofighter, the controversial combat jet to be built with Britain, Italy, and Spain, was yesterday given the go-ahead by the German parliament, thus clearing its final political hurdle.

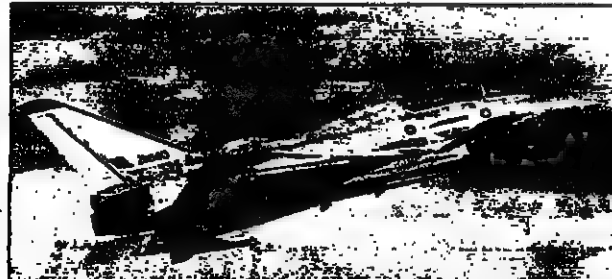
The vote came after the latest political dogfight in the long-running row over the future of the fighter. The fierce parliamentary debate saw Eurofighter's opponents using the issue to try to shoot down Helmut Kohl's Government. But the need to win next year's elections kept the fronts more or less solid: Social Democrats and Greens voted against, but the governing Christian Democrats and the Free Democrats (with a few defections) carried the day.

Opposition Social Democrats had openly tried to woo members of Herr Kohl's Christian Democratic Union in an effort to produce an embarrassing defeat for the aircraft and the Chancellor. Although Volker Rühe, the Defence Minister, expressed confidence that the Eurofighter, which already has Cabinet approval and a secure budget allocation, would go ahead, it was uncertain until the moment of the vote whether the Government would be able to mobilise all its support-

ers. The coalition has a ten-seat majority and many Free Democrats, the junior coalition partners, are openly sceptical.

The Eurofighter has come under heavy fire over the past two months as its critics threw everything into a last-ditch attempt to halt the project. The fundamental problem has less to do with the technical capabilities of the plane than the passage of time. Critics say that, with the end of the Cold War, the fighter project is unnecessary.

The most determined arguments have been about sharing work because the clinking case for the plane, amid all the uncertainty, is the creation of jobs: supposedly 18,000 in Germany, most of them in Bavaria which, fortunately, is the home state of Theo Waigel, the Finance Minister. It is employment, coupled with a vague sense that the Eurofighter will keep Europe at the technological cutting edge, that yesterday swayed a significant number of otherwise sceptical Social Democrats.



The Eurofighter is under heavy fire from its critics

Arrest after parents see lost child in porn video

FROM JEREMY LOVELL IN BRUSSELS

BELGIAN police have arrested a man believed to be part of a paedophile pornography network involving The Netherlands, Belgium and Portugal, the Justice Ministry said yesterday.

The move came after the parents of a 12-year-old boy who disappeared in Berlin four years ago visited Stefan De Clercq, the Belgian Justice Minister, to ask him to act. They had recognised the boy in a clip shown on Dutch television of a pornographic video made by two men — one Dutch, one Belgian.

The arrest comes after a campaign by Nelly Maes, a deputy in the Flemish regional government. Clips of another video she had seen were shown on Portuguese

television. Two men, one Dutch, one Belgian, could be seen abusing boys in Madeira.

Mr De Clercq had said he was powerless to act as the offences had taken place before Belgium introduced a law enabling it to prosecute its nationals for sex crimes committed abroad. But Mrs Maes said some offences took place since then. (Reuters)

□ Berlin: A German teacher went on trial yesterday accused of sexually abusing children as young as three and selling videos and photographs featuring child pornography to clients on a list of 5,500 names. Peter Schnaibelt, 50, who was arrested in Colombia, denied all charges. (AFP)

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Damian Whitworth with the suit he will fight for; Elton is keeping the muff



Camping it up in the grounds: the gardeners seemed used to the spectacle

My brief encounter in Elton's closet

Elton John is selling 10,000 items of clothing at his charity shop tomorrow. Damian Whitworth enjoyed a preview

Think Elton John. Come on, quickly now, what is the first thought that pops into your head when you read the name? At this moment it's probably his performance of *Candle in the Wind '97* at Westminster Abbey. But after that? Fur-trimmed specs? Two-foot-high wigs? Platform boots? The most garish suits created so far for popkind?

We think of Elton John and we think of his outlandish clothes. That is because Elton never stops thinking about his clothes. This is a man who makes peacocks look self-effacing, who would have left Joseph feeling distinctly drab and underdressed in his Technicolor dreamcoat.

Elton parades through life as if it is a fancy-dress pageant, and wherever he parades, he shops. He can buy more suits in an afternoon than most of us wear in a lifetime. His closets are bigger than many people's homes. Now he has decided to have a clear-out.

Three years ago Elton opened a temporary charity shop. Out of the Closet, in London, and flopped off 2,000 items from his wardrobe to benefit his Aids Foundation. This time round he is doing things on a rather grander scale. Just quite what a mind-boggling scale only

became apparent when he invited *The Times* to his home for a preview.

Sadly, Elton was still on his way back from the United States when we called at his sprawling red-brick mansion outside Windsor. But he had hinted at the size of the wardrobes that awaited. "If I have one addition left in my life these days, it's shopping," he said. "I just love buying clothes."

Even his sweeping driveway indicates that he is not given to understatement, lined as it is with neo-classical sculptures of men of the Adonis ilk. Inside, languid nudes in oils gaze down from large canvases. Whole walls are covered in gold and platinum discs. And there are dogs everywhere. Elton has 13 in all, including eight affectionate border terriers. The book of 1,000 baby names on a shelf in the kitchen no doubt helps in christening additions to the pack.

We had been told that the clothes he was selling were only those he had accumulated over the past three years. As we sipped tea with Jenny, his housekeeper of 21 years, we tried to calculate just how many clothes we were talking about.

Given his self-confessed clothes habit, it seemed plausible that three years of clobber would be the equivalent, perhaps, to the amount accumulated by the

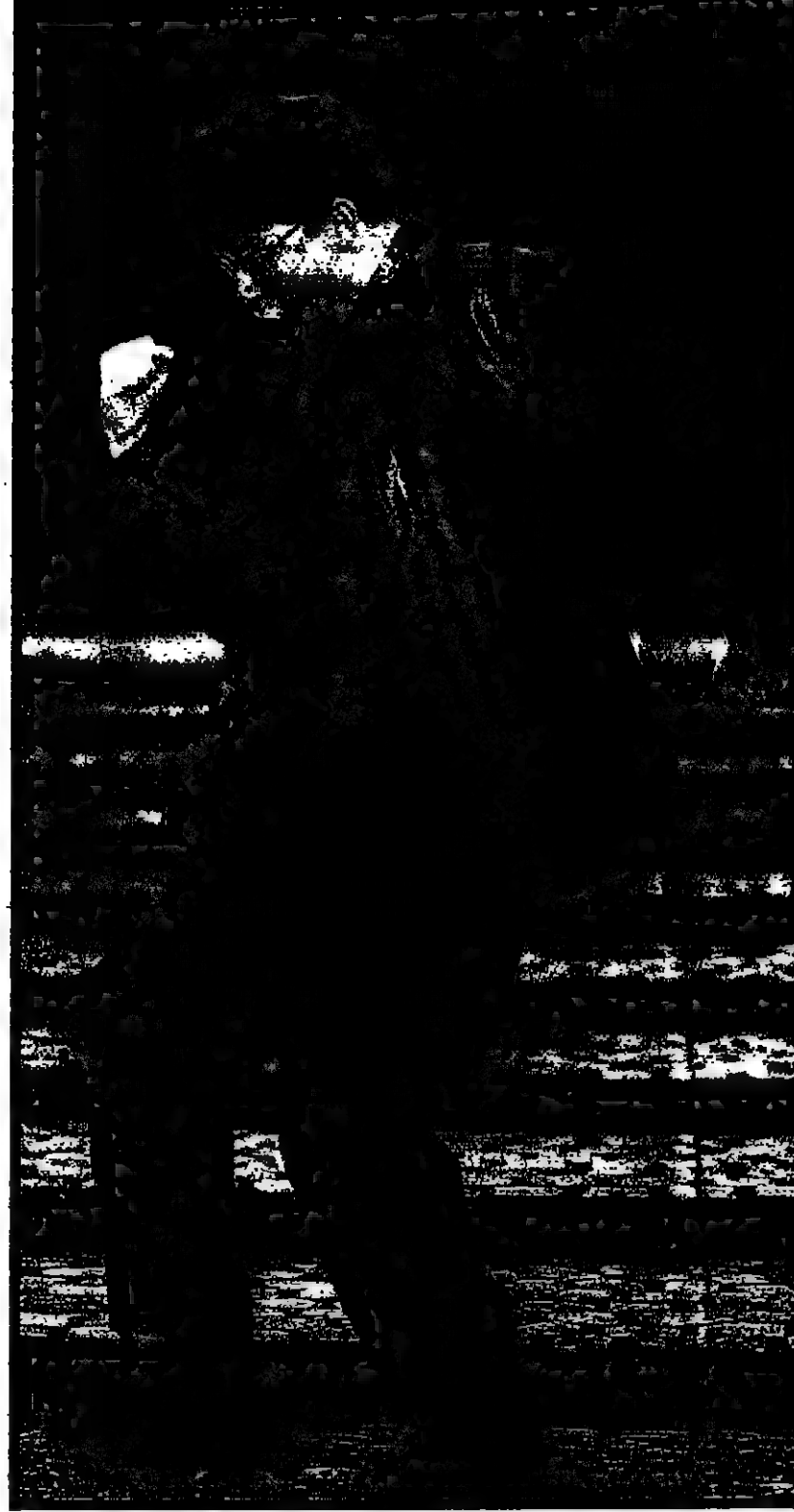


Rock and roll sells its sole: Elton's size-eights include metallic Versace boots

average pop star in a career. Jenny smiled quietly to herself. A notice that Elton has stuck on the kitchen board should have suggested to us that we were dealing with a man who has something as soon as he sees it. It reads: "Of course I need it today. If I wanted it tomorrow I'd order it tomorrow." The clothes, which will go on

sale at Elton's new London shop from tomorrow, have been assembled from his various houses around the world. We were led to the garages where they were being sorted out. There was, apparently, no room to accommodate them all in the mansion.

Inside were rack upon rack of clothes.



Every inch the pop star? Rainbow-coloured suit and floral embroidered shirt

We were taken upstairs to a large storeroom above the garage complex. Unlike your average storeroom, however, this was carpeted, with huge oil paintings on the wall, more of those neo-classical sculptures of muscular men, and spacious enough for a couple of families. It was jammed with clothes racks. Children could have attempted to start expeditions to Narnia here but given up exhausted after wading through the racks for hours, only to find more rails groaning under the weight of creations by Versace, Prada, Yves Saint Laurent, Donna Karan, Richard James and Alexander McQueen.

Robert Key, a friend of Elton's of many years and a co-director of the Aids Foundation, was supervising the pricing of garments. He had his work cut out. Elton had selected between 8,000 and 10,000 items.

The truth dawned. Taking into account that other clothes were not being sold, this meant that Elton had bought, on average, at least ten items of clothing a day for the past three years. Given that some days must be non-shopping days, it was difficult to imagine what an Elton shopping trip was like.

"He's great fun to be with as a person," says Mr Key slowly. "But shopping with him, it's hard to keep up. It seems that he's

just buying at random, somebody out of control. But then three weeks later you see what he is wearing and it has all been very carefully put together. There was this plan; it wasn't just ad hoc."

"He hasn't worn it all, but it's quite surprising how much he has worn. You've got to remember that he's always touring and travelling and has to think of performances and interviews. He'll see something and buy it in four or five colours. If he wears a shirt for a TV interview, that's it, it's gone."

This might sound fantastically frivolous if it wasn't for the clear-outs. Elton says he loves "knowing that all my purchases will ultimately be recycled to raise money for charity."

He supports the fashion industry by buying a Versace suit for £2,000 and enjoys the acts of purchasing and wearing. Then a member of the public buys it for £200 and gets a bargain, and the money goes to charity.

The clothes for the sale are indeed absurdly priced. As well as immaculate designer suits from £175-£300, overcoats are similarly priced and untold numbers of shirts will sell for around £50. The silk scarves and baseball caps are cheaper, as are the shoes, which Elton clearly buys in the same wild manner as Imelda Marcos.

'I'd prefer a porcelain exhibition to a rock show'

THE NEW, sober Elton John will confess to only one vice: shopping. And it appears that in the death of Gianni Versace he lost not only a soulmate but also a muse who guided his buying sprees.

"I'd rather go to a porcelain exhibition than a rock concert," he said recently. "In Italy Gianni used to take me to see these beautiful homes, these beautiful things which normally you wouldn't see. He would tell me all about them, educate me. I'm going to miss that." The great consumer was speaking on the Oprah Winfrey show. Almost as striking as his reinvention as a drug-free rock survivor is his retreat, in material terms, from the saturation kitsch of a latter-day Liberace to the restrained opulence of his newly refurbished English homes.

Versace may at times have been as much a rival as a guide. He once boasted that he could spend \$3 million in two hours, telling *The New Yorker*: "I go shopping one day in Paris buying things for my house in Miami. That night I come back home and I see the figure I spend. Oh, I start to dance."

Still, it is hard not to see his influence in Elton's surroundings. Where jukeboxes, pin-ball machines and outlandish teddy bears were once the backdrop for cocaine-fuelled parties, there are now Gainsboroughs, Venetian Old Masters and costly caches of Meissen china. His huge spectacles are now more often sold for Aids relief than worn.

Long before the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, finally legitimised public tears, Elton John was one of its most flamboyant advocates. He calls himself a melancholy person and considers crying healthy. He wept buckets at the Versace funeral in Milan, with a consoling Princess at his side. But when the Princess died he seems to have coped by being the stoic grown-up — a role for which he thanks his sobriety.

"Seven years ago I don't think I would have been able to handle it," he said, recalling a turning point that came during a therapy session when his then boyfriend called him, accurately, a bulimic drug addict. He promptly checked into a spartan shared room in the rehabilitation wing of a Chicago hospital and

says he has not taken drugs since. "The hardest thing was thinking that I could solve everything myself," he continued. "I thought, 'I'm intelligent, I'm wealthy, I'm successful. I can do this.' I couldn't. For 16 years I couldn't say I needed help. As soon as I said that I was away, and thanks to those seven years of clean time I think I've handled the two deaths very well. I've been able to comfort those I love whose loss is more than mine."

He was never more impressively composed than when singing his new version of *Candle in the Wind* at the Princess's funeral. "I switched off," he said. "I had to. I wanted to sing it beautifully for her, for the public and the family. With that amount of audience you've got to draw on all your experience. You just have to grit your teeth."

Candle in the Wind, besides selling nine million copies, marked the creative high point of John's year. His new album, *The Big Picture*, has been less well received. (It "plods through painfully flowered ballads until all colour and fragrance are lost", one critic wrote.) The record appeared two weeks after a rare flurry of American television appearances by the singer. He barely mentioned it on air, no doubt wary of being seen to profit from public interest in his performance at the funeral.

Instead, he plugged a documentary on his life and style by David Furnish, his partner of four years. As he told another interviewer recently, he wanted an honest film: "One where people will say 'She was an absolute cow'." "She", of course, is Elton John, and in Ms Winfrey's Chicago confessional his honesty became him. He spoke bluntly of a 1984 suicide attempt before his short-lived marriage to a German sound technician: "I got absolutely smashed, went home, got very depressed, stuck my head in the gas oven and left all the windows open."

He said that his new hairstyles are hair weaves and that he would like to kill thin people who can eat what they like. His departed friends would have loved to hear him add that people matter more than things.

GILES WHITTELL

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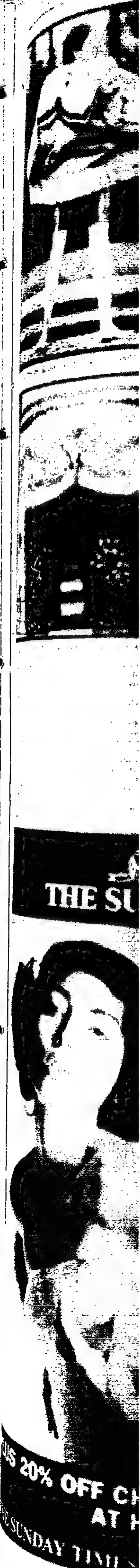
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Flash dresser in a huge fake-fur coat, by Versace



You might not wish to be knocked down by a bus while wearing the Versace boxers, although drivers are guaranteed to swerve at the sight of the chequered suit, original cost £2,000, but on sale tomorrow at the bargain price of £200

His size-eights were too small for me, but a pair of blue suede Versace loafers with a strap inside the back were ideal. These only emerged when, after sorting through a mountain of footwear, Key went for a rummage in the "shoe room" in the main house. They normally retail at around £250 but will be going for £35 tomorrow along with dozens of other pairs.

The individual pricing was taking some time. At each rack the Aids Foundation volunteers found outfits they just had to try on. For me too, a man who owns six suits at a push, it was too much to resist. A morning was lost in the world's biggest dressing-up box.

Mr Key says that although much of the gear has been worn by Elton in concert, he had been less outlandish in his choice of attire in recent years. Nevertheless, there were still many highly exuberant styles. With at least half of the offerings designed by Elton's late friend, Gianni Versace, this was hardly surprising. I was particularly taken with the combination of a velvet Versace rainbow-coloured suit with matching waistcoat, a scarlet, floral embroidered shirt and blue suede loafers. Ideal for brightening up a long day reporting on a High Court case, or parting the sea of pinstripes at a City reception.

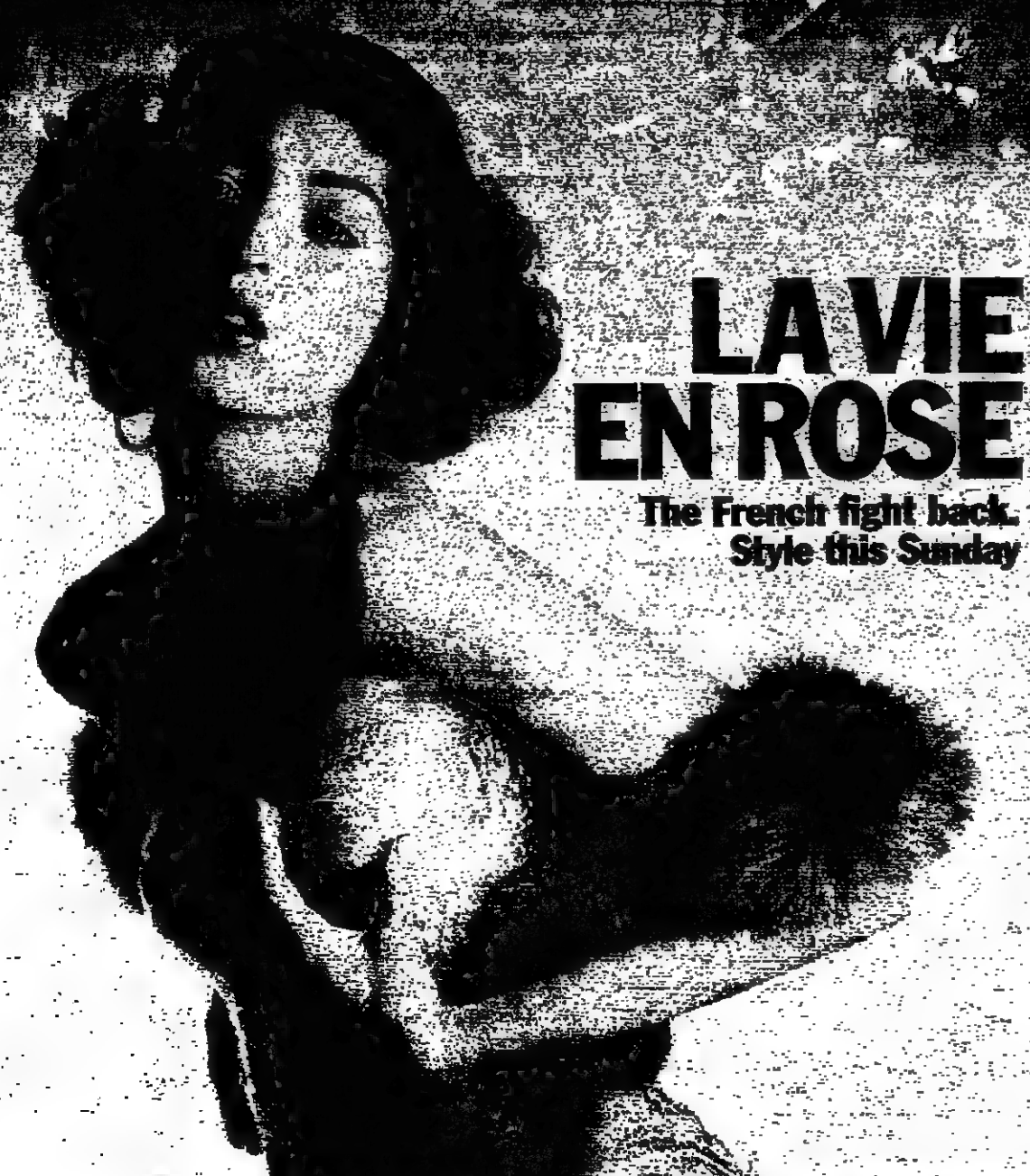
A black and white chequered suit, also by Versace, must have been bought during a bubbler period for Elton. The trousers were significantly looser and covered, and I am a touch over 6ft tall and skinny, it was surprising how many of Elton's clothes did fit. Often the trousers and sleeves were too short but rooting about turned up some good fits.

Between changes I became quite attached to wearing a touzou, black Versace dressing gown, though the cravat perhaps jarred with the baseball cap. My favourite headgear, a little tight cap bedecked with tiny bunches of bananas and a sash, was not for sale. Neither was the muff that appeared to have been constructed from the greater part of an entire pheasant.

The gardeners batted not an eyelid at our japes, which by the end were getting a little silly. The gambols around the grounds in nothing but Versace boxer shorts and a huge fake-fur coat are best forgotten, though sadly, I fear. The Times photographer thinks differently. Much more my style was the Harris tweed suit by Richard James, which would fit beyond all my previous sartorial dreams after a little alteration. I shall be in the queue at Elton's shop tomorrow morning and anyone who tries to beat me to it will have a fight on their hands.

'At each of the racks, the volunteers found outfits they just had to try on'

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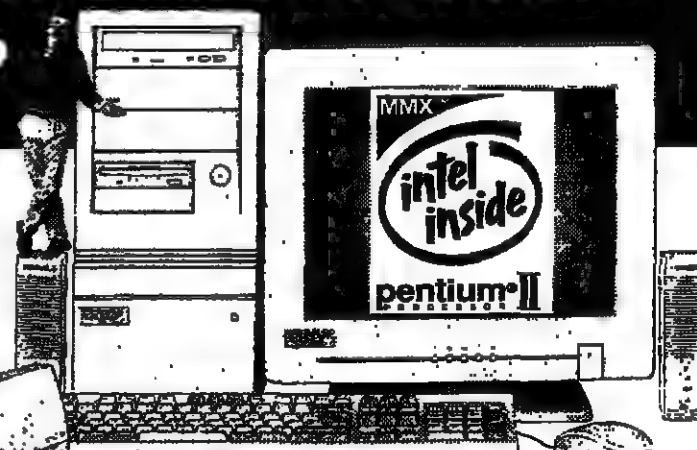
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I will plead guilty to foolishness, but never to fraud

Jack Lyons rues the day that he became involved in the Guinness affair. Today he is still searching for answers as to why he ended up in court

Fifteen years ago, I showed a prospective tenant around an office building I owned near Marble Arch. The bright young man in the button-down shirt represented an American company of which I had never heard. He intrigued me, for unlike others who had seen the building, his main concern was locating computers on every desk and how the cables to connect them all together could be accommodated.

These were the days, not so very long ago, before the personal computer had infiltrated every aspect of our lives, and I recognised an excitement and an energy about this company which seemed to mirror the mood of the time. A Conservative Government was very much in power and a sense of enterprise was abroad. This was, however, to prove a fateful day. The company to whom I would become landlord, and for whom I was subsequently persuaded, reluctantly, to play the role of

alternative offers whose comparative value changed hourly in line with movements in the share price of both companies. It is no secret that both Argyll and Guinness were active in supporting the price of their own shares and, as today's report also shows, each was involved in depressing the share price of the other. This activity came as little surprise to those involved in the bid. The City's leading stockbrokers, merchant bankers and corporate lawyers had all seen it before, and they took it in their stride.

Even the prospective knockout blow of a Monopolies and Mergers reference of the Guinness bid was addressed with the same down-to-earth determination and resolve which was ultimately to deliver success. And it was in respect of the reference that my political contacts were successfully called in to play, much to the gratitude of the Guinness board, if not the DTI inspectors, who are apparently rather less

them in the first place. If they were forgotten, we have surely paid the price, for few of the distinguished names which graced the Guinness "War Cabinet" have escaped devastation of their professional or personal lives, or both.

In my eighty second year, I find myself surveying the pages of a report which depicts the actions of another age, and which includes several deeply uncomfortable references to my behaviour. Some are uncomfortable because they are false; others because they are true.

Not a day has passed in the past ten years when I have not asked myself the question "Why? Why did I allow myself to become involved? Why did I fail to confirm whether these actions were lawful? Why did the Guinness lawyers not tell us that they weren't? And why, if such comprehensive breaches of the rules took place, were only some of the professionals, the men whose job it was to know the rules, prosecuted successfully?

Ten years ago, I could find no answers to these questions when I was asked them by my children. Today, all too painfully, I am being asked the same questions by my grandchildren, and I am still bereft of answers.

I simply do not believe that my actions were criminal and, in the seemingly endless search for truth, I continue to spend a great deal of time and a corresponding amount of money in pursuing this matter through the courts. I am, however, prepared to plead guilty to foolishness.

As a 70-year-old who had long since retired from the hands-on management of businesses, I was unquestionably flattered to be playing a leading role in the biggest takeover fight in British corporate history. Perhaps I was puffed up with a sense of my own importance, and hindered by a lack of familiarity with the rules and regulations of the day, I allowed myself uncritically to enjoy the excitement of the chase and to profit from its success.

In the years since, I have had cause every day not just to regret, but also to appreciate the continuing support and kindness of my dear wife, my family and my friends around the world. Thankfully, I know from personal experience that any headlines from today's revelations will be condemned to the same fate as this article - supporting the weight of tomorrow's fish and chips. My only prayer is that soon I will be able to put this ghastly business behind me and get on with what is left of my life.

Pure Genius? Pure Poison? Jack Lyons, who was knighted for his services to charity and the arts, became embroiled in the Guinness/Argyll scandal through his advisory role with the leading consultancy firm, Bain & Co. His part in the illegal share support operation that enabled Guinness to take over Distillers brought him to trial in 1990. He was fined £3 million and stripped of his knighthood.

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'I have had more than ten years to reflect on events, and to regret my part in them'

impressed by my achievements.

All of us involved with the bid worked hard. Each day merged with the next, with a few hours of sleep snatched in between. The DTI inspectors seem to have formed the view that the whole thing was a calculated breeze. I, for instance, am credited with having provided the "occasional avuncular chat". But my memory is very different. And the inspectors seem to have forgotten completely that the huge fees which were offered reflected success. Failure would not have been rewarded.

And this, perhaps, was at the heart of the problem. We all had our heads down, intent on winning. In charge of the process was a man who met, in every respect, the Shavian definition of the "unreasonable man" - someone without whom progress is impossible.

In our anxiety to win, perhaps we all did forget the rules, presupposing that we knew



The death of trust

As Parliament once again prepares to debate euthanasia, Cardinal Basil Hume issues a warning

The advocates of euthanasia are on the march. Next month a Private Member's Bill promoting "doctor-assisted dying" will be briefly debated in Parliament. The Government has already made it clear that it does not support the legalisation of euthanasia. But the law forbidding it has already been weakened by the courts, and it could be further undermined by Law Commission proposals on mental incapacity on which the Government is soon to consult.

Contemporary morality tends to elevate the right to choose above every other value. It finds offensive the traditional teaching on the sanctity of human life which has been part of common morality in Western societies. This outlook is having many profound effects. It has desensitised many people to the evil of abortion. It has also predisposed many to support euthanasia.

Euthanasia aims at ending a life judged to be no longer worth living, either because of suffering or because of presumed poor "quality". The aim is accomplished either by a direct action, such as administering a lethal injection, or by depriving a person of medical treatment or ordinary care in order to bring about death. An essential defining characteristic of euthanasia is the intention to end life, that is, to kill.

It is therefore completely different when a doctor uses drugs in order to alleviate pain, even when doing so may hasten death as a foreseen result. The doctor's intention is not to kill, but to relieve pain. It serves the advocates of euthanasia to obscure this distinction. Some reports of the Anne Lindell case in the High Court a few weeks ago seemed to suggest that a victory had been won for euthanasia. Ms Lindell, terminally ill from motor neurone disease, sought a declaration from the court that her doctor could legally administer pain relief even if the drugs shortened her life. In fact no declaration was needed, or given. Both the law and, indeed, morality have always permitted doctors to administer palliative drugs to alleviate the symptoms of terminally ill patients, even if death is hastened as an unintended effect.

Efforts to introduce legislation to allow active euthanasia (such as giving a lethal injection), or assisted suicide (such as leaving lethal pills for the patient to take themselves), have so far failed in this country. There is a risk, however, that euthanasia could enter by the back door as a result of certain court

decisions and Law Commission proposals. These appear to sanction not active but passive euthanasia, that is intentionally terminating life by the withdrawal or denial of treatment. Clearly, life need not be preserved at all costs when a person is already dying. Medical treatment, though not basic nursing care, can and should be withdrawn (after appropriate consultation and agreement) when it is futile or imposes an excessive burden on the patient. To allow a person to die in these circumstances is not euthanasia. Moreover, when death is imminent and inevitable, a person can morally refuse treatment that would only secure a precarious and but denance prolongation of life. Such a refusal is not the same as suicide, but simply an acceptance of the imminence of death.

But what if death is neither imminent nor inevitable? Suppose a doctor were to withhold insulin from a young, unconscious diabetic with the intention of bringing about death, because the doctor thought the patient's life to be not worth living. That would be passive euthanasia. If the doctor were deliberately to withhold insulin in order to assist in carrying out the patient's previously declared wish to end his life, it would be assisted suicide.

Court judgments, such as that in the Tony Bland case, already appear to permit passive euthanasia in certain situations. Furthermore, the Government is about to consult on Law Commission recommendations to overhaul the law relating to decision-making in respect of mentally incapacitated adults. As drafted, these proposals would appear to enshrine in statute some of the disturbing precedents already set by the courts. They appear to be so widely drawn as to permit the withdrawal of treatment in certain circumstances not only on the basis that it is futile, where death is imminent or inevitable, but even in order to terminate life because that person's life is judged by others

to be no longer worth living. Additionally, the Law Commission proposals would appear to give statutory force even to subliminally motivated advance refusals of medical treatment. Although suicide has been decriminalised, assisting a person to commit suicide is still a criminal offence. So it should remain. The Government is right to consult on the Law Commission proposals. Whatever their other merits, they must be amended to ensure that euthanasia and assisted suicide remain illegal, even when brought about passively, that is by denial or withdrawal of treatment.

If passive euthanasia were to gain statutory acceptance, pressure for the decriminalisation of active euthanasia would increase. If it were acceptable for doctors deliberately to bring about death by omission, why not by act? Would it not be kinder to dispatch patients by a swift lethal injection rather than subject them to a lingering death by disease or thirst?

There is every likelihood that a law permitting euthanasia, even in limited circumstances, would, as with abortion, lead to a more widespread practice. In The Netherlands 13 years ago the courts declared active euthanasia lawful in certain circumstances. Although the Dutch guidelines require an explicit request from the patient, many thousands of patients have had their lives terminated without explicit request, and recent decisions of Dutch courts have declared lawful the killing of babies with disabilities. The Dutch experience confirms that once it is allowed that doctors (or others) may judge whether a human life is worth living, (as they inevitably do in carrying out voluntary euthanasia) non-voluntary euthanasia inexorably follows. Indeed, if patients can benefit by being killed, it is reasonable to deprive them of that benefit because they are incapable of asking for it. There would be other serious consequences if our society were to

legalise euthanasia. One disturbing effect would be to devalue the contribution which older people and the disabled have to make. The sense that they were unwanted, a burden to their families and a cost to society, would undermine their self-worth. Today's right to die would become tomorrow's duty to die.

The doctor-patient relationship would be corroded. Patients, who are often in any case extremely vulnerable, have to be able to trust their doctors. They cannot easily do so unless they can be confident that doctors will never be disposed to kill them, and that doctors have no warrant to ask whether they are worth caring for or treating.

Moreover, the humane motive to develop truly compassionate and effective approaches to the care of the suffering, and the dying would be undermined if euthanasia were legalised and were to appear the "cost-effective" option. A substantial part of the hospital resources of the NHS are spent on patients in their last years of life. The economic attractions of euthanasia are obvious. It would be a dangerous and insidious temptation.

So too is the demand for spare organs. For instance, it has recently been argued that patients in a persistent vegetative state should be given lethal injections (rather than dying as a result of the withdrawal of treatment) so that their organs may be used for others.

We should note that in 1994 the House of Lords Select Committee on Medical Ethics unanimously opposed the legalisation of active euthanasia. It concluded that "Society's prohibition of intentional killing... is the cornerstone of law and of social relationships. It protects each one of us impartially, embodying the belief that all are equal.... The death of a person affects the lives of others, often in ways and to an extent which cannot be foreseen. We believe that the issue of euthanasia is one in which the interest of the individual cannot be separated from the interest of society as a whole."

Advocates of euthanasia often trade on the fear of pain, suffering and death. But in recent advances in palliative care and effective pain relief, and especially the growth of the hospice movement, have all contributed a great deal to affirming the dignity of people in every phase of life and to help them to die in peace. Killing a person can never be the way to respect human life.

Lunch crunch

IS there life in the old hound yet? Alan Clark, the magnificent former Defence Minister, fell into conversation yesterday with the equally admired Lauren Booth, half-sister of Cherie. According to Miss Booth, a 28-year-old former model, the energetic MP asked her to lunch. To this proposal, she says she gave her consent. They met at the Highland Park/Spectator Parliamentary of the Year awards at the Savoy. Conversation flowed. Now this charmer of the Tory benches assured old-fashioned moralists when he returned to Parliament in May that his roving days were through, yet he retains a certain confidence. "Sometimes I look incredible," he told my colleague, Valerie Grove recently. So did Miss Booth concur? "He looked more crumpled than I expected."

Clark scored rather higher than that other Tory heartthrob Michael Portillo, whom Miss Booth, daughter of the actor Tony Booth, met at the same lunch. "I tried the old masonic handshake," she suggested, "but got no spark back."

Her attentions, it would seem, are directed elsewhere. The son of John Prescott, David, cropped up in conversation. "Now he," she drawled "is really tasty."

● PRIZE for the sharpest remark at yesterday's lunch goes to Lord

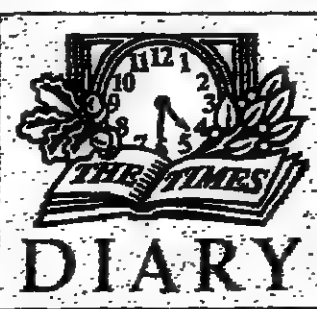


Clark and his new pal

Jenkins of Hillhead. After John Redwood's muscular speech, Roy Mottistone: "He is the Tories' Tesco Blackstone," before stalking out.

Sure, Shirl

OVER lunch with Mo Mowlam, Northern Ireland Secretary, and Frank Johnson, The Spectator's



mercurial Editor, talk turned to terrorism. "We have often been described as the political wing of the Conservative Party," said Frank of his magazine. "And it has been suggested to us that we should decommission some of our articles." The theme was taken up by Miss Mowlam. She disclosed that she "ran away" from her security guards when first elected but since then has been accompanied wherever she goes. "My security guards begin every sentence with 'surely not Secretary of State'. I now call them both Shirley."

● THE Commons had a prewar feel on Tuesday night. Liberal Democrats barrelled in for an evening vote in black tie, having attended their Parliamentary Ball at

the Dorchester. Not all were in convivial mood. One had been ordered to hire evening dress from Moss Bros. "Bloody outrageous that we are propping up the class system wearing these clothes," grumbled the proles champion.

Wakey, wakey

WAS it the alarm clock, or could it be a snub? Peter Lilley was to appear on Radio 5 Live yesterday morning. But as Nicky Campbell's phone-in began, there was no sign of him. Luckily, hardworking John Redwood agreed to do a phone link. Lilley's secretary was keen to take the blame: "There was a mix-up. Peter thought he had been booked for the night before."

● A READER who has just bought a pager for his wife was surprised when it burst into life with a message intended for a Labour MP: "Chancellor to shake up tax and benefits. Whips want MPs to back cuts to loose parent benefits."

Double take

RALPH FIENNES, the handsome English Patient star, and Iain

Sproat, one of the few ministers to emerge with much credit from the last Government, may make an unlikely pair. But both share a passion for Alexander Pushkin.

They are working on separate projects to mark the bicentenary of the Russian writer's birth. Fiennes is co-producing and starring in a film version of the author's classic, *Evgenie Onegin*, while Sproat, who sadly lost his seat last May, heads the editorial board that is translating all the Russian's works for the first time into English. The first four volumes and the film are due to be released in 1999. "We are looking to see if there is any way we can be of mutual help," explains Sproat, who met Fiennes recently. "We might try to co-ordinate the publication of the books with the film." Could this be the start of something? Fiennes the minister, Sproat the film star?

● PADDY ASHDOWN, the admirable Liberal Democrat leader, has sent rather cross e-mail messages to underlings complaining that the party has not capitalised on its Winchester triumph. Why, he wanted to know, was the story no longer receiving coverage? You did jolly well, Paddy, but the last drop of victory has been drunk.



Doomed romance: actors Anna Wojcikiewicz and Huw Garmon

Can we shoot that again, loves?

THE MAKERS of a film chronicling the true story of two lovers torn apart by the Second World War received a surprise as their opus was about to receive its premiere. *Bride of War* tells how John Elwyn Jones, a Welsh Guard in a Polish PoW camp, falls for Celinka, a local girl. After a secret marriage, Elwyn Jones escapes, and, back in Wales, is told that Celinka had died of TB. Elwyn Jones himself has spent the past

five decades believing this poignant end to the film to be the truth. But Celinka's son has just popped up to reveal that she had not perished. Rather, she lived in Poland until her death seven years ago, swearing that the Communist regime had prevented her contacting her husband. A producer gasped: "We will have to seriously consider giving the film a new ending."

JASPER GERARD



THE TIMES THURSDAY NOVEMBER 27 1997

NEW SCHOOL TIES

Labour's plans to bridge the educational divide

Under Tony Blair, the Labour Party's attitudes to many aspects of society have described a parabola from downright hostility through silent denial to wary or even enthusiastic acceptance. Free enterprise, top-rate taxpayers and nuclear weapons have now been joined by private schools in the list of things that Labour loved to hate but now tolerates. Yesterday, the schools minister, Stephen Byers, inspired a warmer reception from an association of private school heads than his predecessor, Emily Blatch, won from the same audience in the same venue four years ago.

In its 1983 manifesto, Labour promised to abolish private schools. Advised that such a policy would be illegal under European law, the party then chose to ignore and despise them in equal measure. As recently as 1995, David Blunkett, now Education Secretary, suggested imposing VAT on school fees. The policy lasted only from breakfast to lunch, when Mr Blair insisted on a retraction. Now Mr Byers has drawn back even from the threat to withdraw charitable status from independent schools.

The party retains some old animosities: the abolition of assisted places was as much about class envy as saving money. Mr Blunkett, along with Gordon Brown, still resents the disproportionate number of places that private school pupils win at Oxford and Cambridge. But Mr Byers' speech suggested that the Government is more concerned now with levelling up the state sector than penalising the private one.

At the Girls' Schools Association, he poured forth a torrent of warm words. "The time has come," he said, "for old prejudices to be buried." He reassured the heads by insisting: "It is not part of this Government's agenda to encourage the Charity Commission to withdraw charitable status from independent schools." He praised the private sector's high educational standards. But he made it clear that the excellence seen

there could be more widely disseminated. Private schools already have a long, if unrecognised, tradition of opening their doors to the wider community. Eton is one of several with links to state schools.

Now, though, the Government is encouraging more bridges to be built between the two sectors. State school pupils could study some A level subjects, such as Latin and Russian, at local private schools. The independents could host summer schools to coach them for Oxbridge entrance. Teachers could be exchanged, and trained in private classrooms. As a gesture of good intent, the Government is offering £500,000 (half of which comes from a benefactor, Peter Lamp) to finance pilot projects next year.

There are clear educational benefits to the state school pupils involved. But what is in it for the private schools? Despite Mr Byers' assurance that these schemes must be voluntary and should not be allowed to compromise educational standards, many schools will oblige out of political prudence. The Government will be watching their response, and a childish reluctance now might spell trouble later.

They may find, though, that opening their doors benefits their own pupils too. The lack of understanding between young people of different backgrounds is exaggerated by their physical separation. A child at a private school, who is driven everywhere and lives in an expensive house, may rarely come across a contemporary from a working-class family.

A little more social mixing might break down the hostility. But both sides need to co-operate. Some private schools complain that their local authorities and state schools want nothing to do with them — and even bar them access from public libraries and public health schemes. If Mr Byers wants these partnership schemes to work, he must also address the attitudes of those who have most to gain from them.

WHITE-WASHING WINNIE

The ANC must not stop Mrs Mandela coming to trial

The most extraordinary occasion of post-apartheid South Africa will shortly reach its climax. Throughout this week, numerous witnesses — 43 in total — have appeared before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to outline the case against Winnie Madikizela-Mandela. It can safely be assumed that many more would have been brought in front of Archbishop Desmond Tutu and his team were it not for the climate of fear that surrounds these events. The brutal murder of 14-year-old Stompie Seipei has been planned directly on Mrs Mandela. She has also been accused of involvement in several other murders and numerous instances of assault and torture.

The most compelling figure has been Kaituma Cebukulu who, at considerable personal risk, returned to South Africa and spoke against Mrs Mandela. His story illustrates an important second aspect of this tragic saga, the means by which critical individuals were deterred from offering testimony at Mrs Mandela's original trial in 1991. Several senior ANC members seem to have been implicated in a conspiracy to spirit Mr Cebukulu away to Zambia. As a result, Mrs Mandela was charged only with kidnapping and ultimately avoided a custodial sentence. Some of those who sought to pervert the course of justice then, have seats at the Cabinet table today.

It is not clear why these grave matters are now with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. That body was established to investigate human rights abuses conducted under apartheid and in the context of that system and the struggle against it. The killing of children would conventionally be

seen as a criminal matter for the courts. The Commission has the power to make certain recommendations to the police. Archbishop Tutu should be requesting a new trial.

This outcome is far from certain. It may not be in the interests of the ANC leadership. Its chief concern is the party conference next month at which Mrs Mandela will be a candidate for the post of ANC Deputy President. If elected, she would probably become South African Deputy President two years later. Nelson Mandela and his supporters know that this would be a disaster. The ANC strategy therefore is to use the Commission to air the charges against Mrs Mandela and undermine her credibility. They hope that will be enough to stop her.

This political objective is not matched by a passion for justice. If Mrs Mandela came to trial there would be many awkward questions. How much did the hierarchy of the ANC know about her alleged reign of terror in Soweto? Who decided that she should be saved from imprisonment six years ago? The ANC want Mrs Mandela to lose next month and then disappear as a political figure. It is uncertain that they will achieve their first aim and exceptionally unlikely that they will realise the second ambition.

The best hope for the truth does not lie with either Archbishop Tutu or President Mandela. It may instead rest with Baroness Nicholson, who has protected and provided safe haven for Mr Cebukulu. She has said that she would help bring a private prosecution if the funds were forthcoming. All those who wish South Africa well must hope that she succeeds.

DANDY IN THE WIND

Or the crocodile rocker shedding his skins

Elton John, not so much the Peter Pan of Pop as his "Tinkerbell", is clearing out his wardrobe. As our correspondent Damian Whitworth reports in our feature pages, it is a task more testing than clearing the Augean Stables. Elton boasts more designer labels than Harvey Nichols — but, unlike the Knightsbridge frock shop, he is selling them all at knock-down prices. Elton's exercise is no mere spring clean but a comprehensive stripping: he's casting off the Full Monty. If, however, his shedding of threads were, *Full Monty* style, accompanied by music it would have to be *Goodbye Yellow Kitchens*.

There will be those whose nose turns up at the thought of slipping into suits, let alone boxer-shorts, which once swaddled the Waiford warbler's ample frame. But if there is a thread running through the Englishman's wardrobe it is the ubiquity of second-hand clothes. No Oxford undergraduate would risk a Commem ball without the battle-hardened Pull Dinner Jacket of his forefathers. Evening dress isn't evening dress without ancestral claret stains on the barthea. On the moors the gun, which must be acquired from a kindly relative, will only rest handsomely on the shoulder of a tweed suit which has itself been fashioned for a generous grandparent.

It is not only the uniform of Old Britain but the chic of Cool Britannia which relies upon the hand-me-down and cast off. From Notting Hill to Nottingham recycling extends from paper to Prada. Grand dames who have tired of their couture allow those

with tighter Barclaycard limits but similar tastes to snap up designer bargains in specialist second-hand stores. The artistry of the original, with all its genius of design and craftsmanship in the cutting-room, depends on a customer willing to pay handsomely for something hot off the catwalk. Once novelty has faded, however, quality still remains.

Those Ladies who Lunge for this season's creation would not dare risk being seen in the same frock twice. But the passing of their passion is, like game going high, a reason to cherish the perishable. If it were not for the fashion victim's fickleness the chance to wear a work of art would remain the preserve of the few rather than becoming, through the second-hand store, a treat for the many. It is a process as much Old Tory as New Labour — proof that trickle-down economics works.

Elton is, however, a figure like the Queen — above politics. His motivation is the purest charity. While Carnegies and Gettys may have set the standard for philanthropy Elton's royalties from *Candle in the Wind* and the profits from his closet-clearing have enriched good causes as generously as any prince of commerce. Pop music and fashion are exercises in the ephemeral, the freezing of taste at a moment in time. But when both are imbued with feeling and aspire to art their appeal can transcend the circumstances which created them. So it was with *Candle in the Wind*, so, in their capacity to generate new happiness for buyers and beneficiaries, it is with Elton's motley.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Tory need for radical reform

From Mr John Horam, MP for Orpington (Conservative)

Sir, Today's leading article, "Reform and resistance", on the leadership of the Conservative Party is entirely right. Universal franchise is the central issue.

I have proposed to the 1922 Executive Committee that MPs alone should trigger an election and whittle the contenders down to the final two or three, but at that point the franchise should be thrown open to all party members on a one person, one vote basis.

The main objection to this seems to be that it would favour incumbents and well-known figures. If, however, the pentultimate and final stages were separated by three to four weeks during which open campaigning took place, an outsider would have ample opportunity to make his or her mark.

This is a radical step but it would have immense advantages in revitalising the party and fits well with William Hague's modernising approach.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN HORAM,
House of Commons,
November 25.

From Mr Peter Frankel

Sir, Contrary to your report (November 24), members of the Charter Movement are not "rebels"; they are supporters of the Conservative Party and its aims. Our intention since 1981 has been to ensure that the Conservative Party becomes more democratic and more attuned to the opinions of its members.

The intent is to improve the party and to return it to government. At present it is inviting ideas on how to become more democratic and listening more to the views of those who support it.

As a member of the Charter Movement's executive, I fail to see how those providing such views can be described as rebels.

Yours faithfully,
PETER FRANKEL,
Elmstead,
Chapel Road,
Limpfield Common, Surrey,
November 25.

Tobacco sponsorship

From the Director of Ash

Sir, Mr Max Mosley, President of the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (letter, November 24), says that if the EU imposes a ban on televised tobacco sponsorship of motor racing in Europe, Formula One "can easily" move out of Europe and beam back television pictures of unrestricted tobacco advertising at new grand prix events in Asia or Eastern Europe.

In fact there is the power to deal with this problem by regulating broadcasting. Cigarette advertising on TV has been banned in the UK since 1965 and across all of Europe since 1991. It would not be a great leap to extend this to tobacco advertising at televised Formula One events.

This would be unlikely to mean a blackout of Formula One. It would lead to an agreement between the broadcasters and the event organisers to keep tobacco advertising off the TV screens — either by using new technologies to superimpose non-tobacco advertising or by simply not having tobacco billboards in front of every camera and everything else covered in cigarette adverts.

By forcing Formula One to choose between television and tobacco, governments in Europe and elsewhere could foil the tobacco industry in its efforts to use motor racing to encourage young people to smoke.

Yours sincerely,
CLIVE BATES,
Director,
Ash (Action on Smoking and Health),
16 Fitzhardinge Street, W1,
November 25.

Smokers and tolerance

From Mr Kevin Cobb

Sir, Bernard Levin writes today ("When smokers are a drag", *Weekend*, November 22) with his usual mixture of intelligence and good sense. Like him, I am a non-smoker, and have no personal axe to grind.

However, I am disturbed by the increasing influence of the growing army of people for whom the rule of law is not enough, and who feel that they have an additional right to tell the rest of us what we may and may not do, read and not read, see and not see, and even think and not think.

Society needs laws, and it needs compassion, but it also needs tolerance. Non-smokers should be able to live and work without tobacco smoke around them. There must be non-smoking areas of public transport and public buildings, and I shall sit in them. But I will not look with hatred and contempt at those who choose to sit elsewhere and smoke, provided that they cause me no harm or annoyance.

If they wish to smoke then it is their right and none of my business, or the business of anyone else. Too many people seem all too willing to jump on the bandwagon of persecution of minorities.

Yours sincerely,
KEVIN COBB,
19 Spurlings, Oundle,
Peterborough, Cambridgeshire.
xj06@dial.pipex.com
November 22.

Opposition to coastguard closures

From the Medical Practitioner to the Island of Shapinsay

Sir, Your correspondent, Commander Fetherstone-Dike (letter, November 21), mentioned the proposal by the shipping minister, Glenda Jackson, seemingly on the advice of the Coastguard Agency, to close four coastguard rescue sub-centres in the North of England and Scotland. One of these is the Pentland Coastguard Station situated on Orkney, whose work will be transferred to the station at Aberdeen, over 100 miles away.

The Pentland station covers the notorious Pentland Firth, that area of sea between the north coast of Scotland and the Orkney archipelago, which is the most dangerous stretch of water around the coastline of the United Kingdom.

The proposal is ill-advised, following as it does from an over-reliance on high technology to the exclusion of traditional methods, and the devaluing of that most prized possession to the seafarer in distress, the Coastguard Agency's local knowledge.

Some months ago, when involved in the contingency planning for medical emergencies on this island, I discovered that the ropes which had previously been part of the standard equipment of our coastguard team had been removed on the authority of the Coastguard Agency. I asked the agency what it would do if a small child fell a few feet over a cliff edge, and was lying unconscious on a ledge.

The Chief Executive, Chris Harris, replied with an elaborate plan involving a helicopter from Shetland (over 80 miles away), and teams from various other islands, the response time for which would mean that in the climate we have here, the child could have died from exposure, even if relatively uninjured by the fall.

The over-reliance of the Coastguard service on technology represents a misguided and out-of-date line of thought. Glenda Jackson should think again before making a wrong and potentially dangerous decision.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN BROOKE,
Elwickbank,
Island of Shapinsay, Orkney,
November 21.

From Mr Tim Eaton

Sir, A few years ago HM Coastguard made very considerable savings by closing their lookouts. Other than vessels with functioning radios, those in distress were to rely on fellow mariners and sharp-eyed members of the public to spot their signals and raise the alarm.

Three years ago the National Coastwatch Institution was established and registered as a charity, modelled on the RNLI. Our lookout station on Bass Point, here on the Lizard, was the first of the derelict lookouts to re-open and we have now maintained a daylight watch here every day for almost three years, manned entirely by volunteers. During events such as the Fastnet Race and when called upon by the Coastguard we keep 24-hour watches.

This small village already provided men for the Lizard lifeboat and the Auxiliary Coastguard. Of the thirty watchkeepers here, several are redundant coastguards, former lifeboatmen, seamen and naval officers. Others, like myself, are landlubbers. All watchkeepers undertake training and we keep a log of passing vessels, yachts, canoes, cliff-walkers and climbers. Perhaps our most regular function is to monitor the inshore fishermen who often work alone in small open boats in these dangerous seas.

Our station has been joined by 15 more during our three years of operation. More are planned. We raise funds in the usual ways to pay for our daily communications with Falmouth Coastguard, and to maintain and equip our station.

We have been helped by our landlord, The National Trust, and by other charities and local businesses. We have a second-hand radar set and marine radio scanner. We hope that our next acquisition will be large mounted binoculars similar to those which were removed by HM Coastguard when they closed the station.

Yours faithfully,
TIM EATON (Honorary Treasurer),
NCI Bass Point,
a-Wartha Menhir,
The Lizard, Cornwall.
e@eaton.co.uk
November 21.

Lessons in commerce

From Mr M. B. Murphy

Sir, Simon Jenkins says ("Falling into a tiger trap", November 26): "If the guru Michael Porter is correct and global commerce is the armed conflict of our age, then commerce should be as vital a part of the curriculum as military service once was."

He suggests that young people should recognise such concepts as price mechanisms, economic growth, etc.

This is clearly to misunderstand the role of the ordinary citizen. Drafting someone into the Armed Forces merely requires them to be given sufficient training to perform some relatively useful task, even if it is in the cookhouse. Even at the sharp end, little more is usually required than the ability to follow orders. The direction and

conduct of conflict is the job of the strategist.

Therefore, it is unnecessary for all young people to be forced to study economics. All that is required from them is that they contribute to the economic resources used by the strategists in the struggle for global commercial supremacy.

This is achieved in modern times by "persuading" them to put their earnings into the right investment funds, etc — the modern equivalent of telling the common populace that their rulers were waging a "just" war.

Yours faithfully,
MARTIN B. MURPHY,
Department of Law,
The University,
Queensgate,
Huddersfield, West Yorkshire.
sbm@pegasus.hud.ac.uk
November 26.

Targeting tax

From Major-General Mike Reynolds (ret)

Sir, "A 10p starting rate [of income tax] would benefit undeserving rich and deserving poor alike, a real waste of public money which could be much better targeted at the bottom end" (leading article, "Brown's way", November 26).

Surely the same principle applies to Gordon Brown's remarkable gift of £20 to every pensioner household to help with heating bills. I fully accept that some pensioners need assistance, but do those paying higher-rate tax, or even basic rate, really need that £20? Come to that, do the same groups really need that £10 at Christmas?

The same could be said about child allowance and free medicines for those in these tax groups. Why do successive governments fail to direct taxpayer's money to where it's really needed?

Yours faithfully,
MIKE REYNOLDS,
8 Cassington Road,
Eastbourne, Sussex,
November 26.

Wildlife stamps

From Mr Peter Stockwell

Sir, I am delighted to see that, by means of the new issue of postage stamps (photograph, November 22), we are informing the world that we conserve wildlife so badly that even the song thrush is an endangered species.

Yours faithfully,
P. STOCKWELL,
55 High Street,
Wilburton,
Ely, Cambridgeshire,
November 22.

Letters that are intended for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

'Irrational' bans

From Dr Charles S. Bestwick

Sir, I read with interest the comments of leading ophthalmologists that laser pens are unlikely to cause damage to the retina (report, "Eye experts dismiss fears on laser pens as hysteria", November 24; see also letter, November 25). I am sure that thousands of university students will be relieved to know that they will not suffer irreparable damage should a lecturer run amok with his pointer. However, I fear that the opinions of acknowledged experts will have little effect on the Government's deliberations concerning any ban on these instruments.

For example, in voting to ban the legal ownership of cartridge-handguns, politicians of all parties were quite happy to ignore Home Office crime statistics, the Cullen Report (the Labour Party opted for a ban at least a week before the report was published), a Commons select committee, numerous amendments from the Lords and a whole array of experts. We see a similar attitude towards the sale of "atropops".

In short, this Government is not interested in facts but prefers to act on the ill-founded concerns of an increasingly irrational public which gains the vast majority of its information from the sensationalist tabloid press.

Yours faithfully,
CHARLES BESTWICK,
Braehed Farmhouse,
Keig, Aberdeenshire.
csb@rri.sari.ac.uk
November 25.

Testing the water

From Mr Paul Haye

Sir, Your report today on the proposed conversion of Kensington Palace into an art gallery, states that: "The scheme has been floated by Royal Household officials and leaked to test public reaction."

Will it not then sink?

Yours faithfully,
PAUL HAYE,
West Haye Farm,
Haye, Callington, Cornwall,
November 24.

Royal forbearance in face of change

From Mrs R. Gyles

Sir, My admiration for HM the Queen continues to grow (letters, November 26). Some five years ago her country flatly refused to help with the rebuilding of the fire-damaged parts of Windsor Castle, which, after all, is a national monument as well as her home.

She is now about to lose the Royal Yacht, which has also been used to develop trade with countries most successfully, and it seems we are too mean (or do I mean miserly?) to have *Briannia* refitted once more or a replacement built, both of which would bring work to British shipyards. We now hear she may lose the royal train (report, November 17).

From the weekend press, it appears that inheritance tax due on the Princess of Wales's estate is to be paid in full, without any recourse to legitimate tax-avoidance schemes. Can you imagine what moanings and outcries there would be if any of her subjects lost privileges connected with their life's work and were also faced with a vast tax bill? Would they not endeavour to find ways of tax avoidance?

Her Majesty has given this country so much over the past 45 years, can we not appreciate this and stop taking so much from her?

Yours faithfully,
R. GYLES,
April Cottage, Market Lane,
Greet, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire,
November 26.

From Mrs R. Herbert

Sir, I was dismayed to see the front page headline and reports on November 22 concerning the "last words" of Diana, Princess of Wales.

It struck me as being extraordinarily insensitive to publish this information during the week of Her Majesty's golden wedding celebrations, stirring up pain and grief and casting a shadow over an occasion when the nation was trying to put behind it that tragic event — and celebrate with the royal couple a joyful and meaningful occasion.

I did appreciate, however, your leading article, "New monarchy", on the same day, celebrating the anniversary and the monarchy's future.

Yours faithfully,
ROSEMARY HERBERT,
Meadow Fold,
South Road, Liphook, Hampshire.

Noye's raindrops

From Mr A. P. Woolrich

Sir, There is more to making a rain-drop machine for Britten's *Noye's Fludde* than simply hanging china mugs on a length of string (letter, November 26). The manufacture of the one used in last week's performance of the piece in St Mary's Parish Church, Bridgwater, by the pupils of St Mary's VC School was not easy.

A job lot of mugs bought for it proved all to have the same note. St Mary's congregation turned out their cupboards and eventually we were able to assemble a reasonably convincing scale of notes. Incidentally, pottery mugs were more tuneless than china. In the hands of a professional tympnist using metal sticks the device excelled all expectations.

Noye's Fludde also calls for a wind machine. This was made from bits of an old bed and parts of some redundant music rests. It proved exhausting in use and deserves a second life as an exercise machine for the elderly overweight.

Yours sincerely,
A. P. WOOLRICH,
(Moderator and turner),
Canal Side,
Huntworth, Bridgwater, Somerset.

Tate's taste

From Mr Roy Miles

Sir, I was astonished today at Richard Cork's opinion of the Havemeyer Collection and how clever "Sugar King" was to buy Impressionist art while Sir Henry Tate bought prosaic, overpriced Royal Academicians (Arts, "A sweet tooth for Impressionists").

Henry Tate's purchases were as fashionable in his day as the Havemeyer Collection has now become. He had the vision to give us a great museum.

Mr Cork may feel Henry Tate's taste was dull, millions of visitors to his gallery do not.

Yours faithfully,
ROY MILES,
Roy Miles Gallery,
29 Bruton Street, W1,
November 25.

Back of the stalls

From Dr John H. Greensmith

Sir, I read recently that a cinema in Bolton is to open 24 hours a day (News in brief, November 8). When, I wonder, are they going to Hoover the carpet?

I can see it now: "Excuse me, love, can you just lift your feet up while I get under that seat...? Tut, you ought to be out in the fresh air on a nice day like this..."

I don't believe they've thought it through.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN GREENSMITH,
36a North Street, Downend, Bristol,
November 22.

OBITUARIES

DR HASTINGS BANDA

Dr Hastings Banda, first President of Malawi, died on November 25. He was long said to have been born on May 14, 1906, but his death certificate declared him to have been 99.

Hastings Banda was a man of contradictions. He habitually wore the uniform of an English gentleman — black homburg hat and three-piece suit — but also carried a lion's tail fly-whisk, symbol of African leadership. He came to power as leader of a revolutionary nationalist movement and ruled as head of one of the most conservative governments in Africa. He was an elder of the Church of Scotland but also an autocrat capable of ruthless cruelty. He was revered by many of his people but at odds with his fellow African leaders, mainly because of his insistence that the welfare of Malawi required him to maintain close and friendly relations with apartheid South Africa.

He will be remembered mostly because his uncompromising stand against the Central African Federation — for which he spent some time in prison — was a major factor in bringing that ill-fated British experiment to an end. He could also claim that his pragmatic style of government gave the new-born Malawi more than 20 years of stability and relative prosperity, but during his rule thousands of political opponents were jailed, tortured, exiled or murdered.

Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda claimed to have been born in 1906, although there was much dispute about this and his death certificate has declared him to be considerably older. He was the son of a pagan Chewa parents, and his name Kamuzu meant "little root", his mother's infertility having been cured by a herbalist's prescription. He adopted the name Hastings from a missionary. He attended a Church of Scotland missionary school until, at the age of 12, without money and unknown to his parents, he set off for South Africa, taking jobs as he walked the 1,000 miles. While working as a hospital cleaner he decided to become a doctor.

He studied at night while working as an interpreter in a mine outside Johannesburg which he revisited in triumph in 1971 and by 1925 had saved enough to go to the United States. American Methodists helped him to work his way

through school, and he became the only non-white student at the University of Chicago, taking a degree in history and political science.

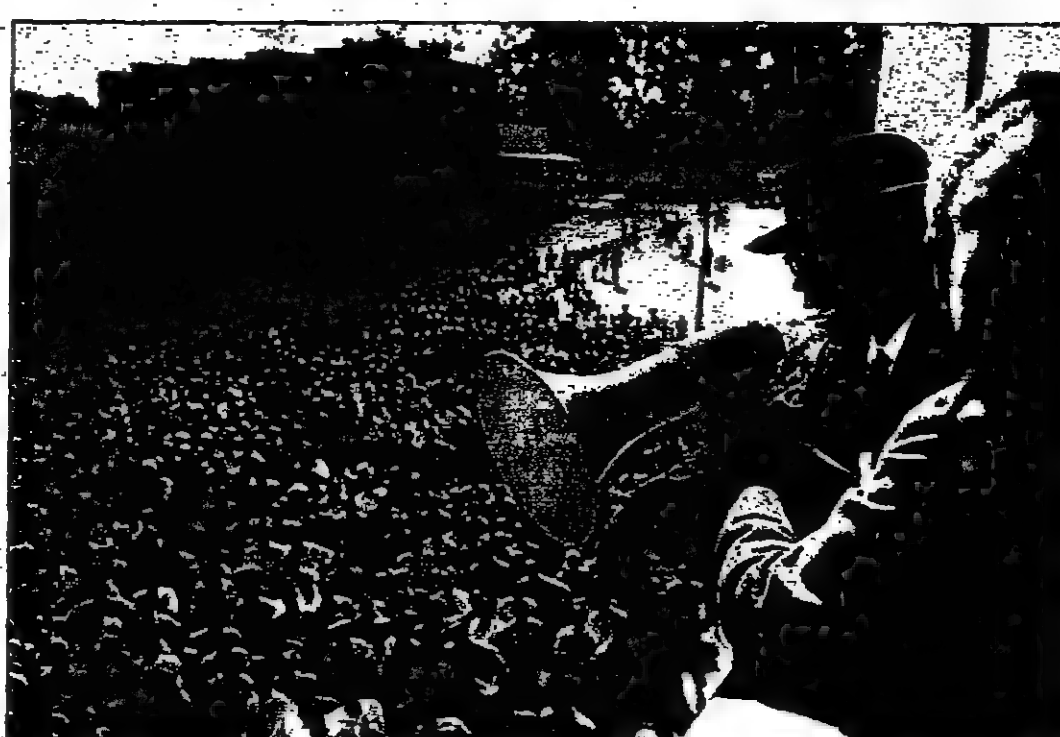
He went on to study medicine at a university for black students in Tallahassee and then took his LRCP at Edinburgh in 1941. He practised in Liverpool and North Shields, and in 1949 settled down as a National Health GP in Willeford. He is still remembered there with respect by former patients and some friends: though normally a distant, reserved man, he was also capable of great charm.

Banda had maintained contact with political life in what was then Nyasaland, and his London home became a regular visiting place for its leaders and a centre for discussion. In particular, in 1952, when proposals were being discussed for a Central African Federation involving Nyasaland and Northern and Southern Rhodesia, Banda acted as mentor and unofficial leader to delegations of chiefs and Nyasaland African Congress leaders who arrived in London to voice their opposition. Banda worked closely with some British MPs who were also against the scheme.

The Federation was nevertheless born in 1963. Banda went to live in Ghana for a while, observing the emotional run-up to independence there in 1947. In Nyasaland, African opposition to what was regarded as an extension of Rhodesian-style white domination was mostly organised by two young nationalists, H. M. B. Chipembere and Kanyama Chiume. They felt their movement needed the leadership of a person of more seniority and political weight and approaches were made to Banda.

In July 1958 he accepted their requests and returned. He had been away for more than 40 years and remembered little of the language. The young men probably hoped for a puppet — it seemed unlikely that the slight figure in a neat suit would exercise any sort of messianic charisma — but as soon as he stepped off the aircraft to exchange shouts of *Awaza* ("dawn") with a crowd of 12,000, a bond was established. His leadership was accepted and remained secure. He became president general of the Nyasaland African Congress, attended the Accra anti-colonial conference of December 1959 and returned to say unequivocally, "To hell with federation!"

He then planned active resistance with his young lieutenants,



conscious that he was likely to be arrested and aware of the way that "prison graduates" such as Nkrumah and Nehru had come to State House by way of a cell. On March 3, 1959, after disturbances, Banda was arrested in his surgery in Limbe and incarcerated in Southern Rhodesia. There was an attempt to implicate him in a "murder plot", a state of emergency was declared and the Nyasaland African Congress was banned.

The Devlin Commission which investigated the Nyasaland troubles and reported later in 1959 found no evidence of Banda's complicity in a murder plot. More devastatingly it found that nationalist aspirations were not confined to a small minority of political Africans, but were shared by the great majority of the people and that there was universal opposition to federation.

By September 1959 the new Malawi Congress Party had come into being, the continued use of armed force was proving ineffective, and the British Government had to acknowledge that its experiment in multi-racial government in central Africa had failed. A new Colonial Secretary, Ian Mackedon, charged with organising a retreat, released Banda and his followers on April 1, 1961. After successful

publicity visits to Britain and New York, Banda led his party to an overwhelming victory (92 per cent of the votes) at a general election that August, on an anti-federalist platform.

Banda now worked in harmony with the liberal Governor, Sir Glyn Jones. He insisted on breaking links with Rhodesia, rejecting shares in loans, the university and agricultural colleges. With his young men well in hand, he ran the country efficiently, repeatedly calling for peace and hard work. Full self-government was granted in January 1963, and by the following year the demands of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland for secession could no longer be denied.

On July 6, 1964, six years to the day after Banda's return to the country, he became Prime Minister of the independent state of Malawi (to become President in 1966 and Life President in 1971). Swift economic ruin was predicted by many whites, and many Africans expected the new country to line up with Nkrumah's Ghana on the left of the spectrum. Both predictions were quite wrong. Economically, Banda came to power with great handicaps: the country had no exploitable mineral deposits, extensive

low-productivity subsistence agriculture, a low level of domestic savings, an inadequate transport network, only an embryonic educational system and a persistent budgetary deficit. But he made progress in almost all fields.

From 1965 to 1977 per capita gross domestic product grew by an annual 3.3 per cent in real terms. The budget deficit, subsidised by the British Government at the beginning, was steadily reduced until 1977. Banda stimulated the growing of export crops, notably tobacco, tea, sugar and groundnuts, and ensured the continued inflow of capital, allowing for notable development of hydroelectric power. The drop in commodity prices at the end of the 1970s and the sharp rise in the price of oil and other imports defeated his best efforts, particularly because combined with drought, Malawi suffered hunger and shortages, though it survived the difficult period better than most African countries.

Banda's critics claimed that economic progress was bought at the price of real independence. He delayed Africanisation, both in the civil service and in the ownership of productive farming land. Most importantly, he recognised how much Malawi depended economi-

cally on South Africa and Mozambique, and maintained close links with them. It was South Africa that provided financial backing for his extravagant plan to build a new capital at Lilongwe and an international airport. He also made arrangements with the Portuguese rulers of Mozambique for the building of a new railway to the sea.

In 1967 he forged diplomatic ties with Pretoria, exchanging visits and then ambassadors with Pretoria. J. B. Vorster visited Malawi in 1970, the beginning of his attempts to open a dialogue with the rest of Africa, and the following year Banda paid a much publicised state visit to South Africa, where he was well received by black and white. A South African MP described his visit as "five days of multi-racialism — five days of social revolution that made apartheid look out of date".

In all this he was at odds with other African leaders, and he was frequently described as a "stooge". He openly quarrelled with President Kaunda of Zambia and President Nyerere of Tanzania, and never bothered to attend meetings of the Organisation of African Unity. He once summed up his attitude by saying: "If it suits the interests of my people, I will make an alliance with the devil."

He had quickly demonstrated that he was personally and firmly in charge. In September 1964, only two months after independence, he dismissed six ministers, including Chipembere, who had done so much to organise his coming to power. Four hundred opponents were jailed. This was followed by regular allegations of plots against him and the ousting from power of anyone who might be in a position to threaten him.

In 1967 a rebellion led by Yatum Chisiza, a former Minister of Home Affairs, was crushed and he and 14 others were killed. In 1977 Albert Mwaanga Ngumwayo, secretary-general of the Malawi Congress Party and apparently a trusted aide, was arrested and convicted of plotting the President's assassination. On Christmas Eve 1981, Orton Chirwa and his wife Vera, both lawyers, former associates and later opponents in exile of Banda, were arrested. They were convicted of treason and sentenced to death, though their sentences were commuted to life imprisonment. Banda was impatient of the

"useless technicalities" of the British legal tradition: the Chirwas, for instance, were tried before a tribal court. He also allowed his "Young Pioneers" an unduly free hand in enforcing party discipline.

Malawi was a democracy to the extent that there were regular elections. But it was a one-party state and the President had to approve all candidates. An MP was once quoted as saying: "Although people had their freedom of choice, it goes without saying that we are here because His Excellency the Life President wants us here." The corruption that can be expected when one party stays in power for so long was palpable, not least because Banda openly believed that wealth for all of Malawi was best created by the successful entrepreneurship of a few, and that government members should not be discouraged from business activity. He himself had wide-ranging financial interests.

In October 1992, after the deaths of more than 40 pro-democracy demonstrators, Western aid donors withheld assistance worth £49 million. Banda reluctantly agreed to hold a referendum and allow Malawians to decide whether the country should adopt multi-party politics. Despite foreign criticism, and despite the opposition of intellectuals within Malawi, Banda remained — or thought he remained — popular with the majority of his people. In the referendum, however, in June 1993, 63.5 per cent voted for multi-party democracy, and in the following May, in the first fully democratic election for 33 years, Banda's Malawi Congress Party was voted out. Banda conceded defeat on the radio, and congratulated his successor, Bakili Muluzi.

On taking office, Muluzi carried out an election pledge to investigate the deaths of four senior politicians in 1983, and in 1995 Banda was placed under house arrest and charged, with five others, of murder. A year later, they were acquitted. Banda then apologised to the nation for any atrocities during his rule, but the state appealed against the verdict. In July this year Banda retired from politics.

Banda's "official hostess" for many years was Cecilia Kadzandira (in respect for whom the Simon and Garfunkel song *Cecilia* was named in Malawi). They never married, and Banda claimed to have no children.

CATHARINE CARVER

Catharine Carver, publisher's editor, died on November 21 aged 76. She was born on September 19, 1921.

AS A publisher, Catharine Carver made an enormous contribution to American and English literature, but her name will never be well known, for she made it in a blue pencil, writing slantwise in the margins of typescripts. No publisher's editor could have given more help to her authors, or have been more resourceful in suggesting changes, some of them involving radical restructuring. With a formidable penetrating understanding of their intentions, she helped writers to be

more creative and expressive. Among the privileged many who benefited were Saul Bellow, Lionel Trilling, Flannery O'Connor, Salman Rushdie, Elizabeth Bishop, Iris Murdoch, John Berryman, Bernard Malamud, Richard Ellmann, Leon Edel and Richard Holmes.

Born in Cambridge, Ohio, Catharine DeBance Carver graduated from Muskingum College, New Concord, in May 1923. After settling in New York, she worked for Harcourt Brace, Houghton Mifflin, Putnam and The New Yorker. She went on, in the mid-1950s, to become assistant editor of *Partisan Review*, which was in its heyday. In the 1960s, for reasons she



did not discuss, she severed all her ties with the United States. Making London her base, she worked for Chatto & Windus, and then for Oxford University Press, where she

was a commissioning editor. Then, not wanting to move with the company to Oxford, she worked briefly for Gollancz before turning to freelance editing. She did some work for Yale University Press, and, even though she was earning less than before, did a lot of editorial work for friends without any payment.

Her mixture of vulnerability and toughness was phenomenal. Diminutive, dignified and diffident, she was modest, soft-spoken, gentle in manner; but her passion for literature made it impossible for her to pull punches. She was not afraid to pass the death sentence on a misbegotten project or a draft that needed to be rewritten from start to finish.

But it was often her ingenuity that realised the full potential of a novel, a biography, an article or an essay. She was incomparable both as an adviser on structure and as a scrutineer of detail. She had an eagle eye for mistakes, and there was no limit to the trouble she was prepared to take when correcting proofs and compiling indexes. Again and again, she proved that it is the editor who really rights a book.

She was unstintingly generous to the writers she helped, but not to herself. Although she loved good theatre, good concerts and good restaurants, she warded off all well-meant efforts to provide financial security for her.

In 1983, when she gave up her flat in Edith Grove and sold all her books, she left England to live at a series of temporary addresses, mainly in Paris, Rome and Amsterdam, staying in the flats of friends, often in their absence, sometimes looking after their pets. It was touching to see her setting off alone, frail but indomitable, with a single suitcase containing all her possessions.

Her devotion to literature and hard work sometimes seemed saintlike, but she also took an almost sensual pleasure in contact with the written word. She hated word-processors, perhaps because they make writing less tangible. But she had an enormous sense of fun, and her innumerable friends will not forget her distinctive gurgle of laughter. She never married.

CHARLES MALDEN

Charles Malden, founder of the Joint Educational Trust and Headmaster of Windlesham House School, died of cancer on October 30 aged 65. He was born on August 17, 1932.



CHARLES MALDEN always intended to be a headmaster. Born into a headmastering family that had owned Windlesham House Prep School since 1857, he was educated there before entering Stowe. But he had to watch his elder brother become headmaster of the family school while he went into the Rifle Brigade for his National Service. From there he joined the SAS before going up to King's College, Cambridge, to read Classics. Graduating in 1956 he went straight to teach at Windlesham. In 1957 he married Elizabeth Ann Wilday.

Within a year, his brother having departed to farm in Rhodesia, he found himself in charge and realised that the way forward was to set up a charitable trust. The Malden Trust was duly founded with a board of governors, creating a balanced constitution for the school which lasts to this day. The Maldens were to run Windlesham House until their retirement in 1994: as a double act their must rate as one of the happiest, longest and most creative of educational partnerships. Under their joint charge Windlesham was outstanding among the independent prep schools of its time, and in many ways ahead of its time. Both the headmaster and his wife were

innovators, and the school became co-educational as early as 1967. The curriculum was broad, with equal emphasis on the classics and computers, on mathematics and music, chemistry and cookery. All talents were encouraged, and cramming for scholarships was forbidden.

But the resounding success of the school depended less on educational theory than on the personal qualities of the Maldens, especially their charm and style, and their warm affection for the children.

As headmaster, Charles Malden sought to make the happiness of the individual paramount. He taught a full timetable, coached all sports, read to children in the dormitories, took all chapel services and was, for a long time, his own bursar. He created a sense of security for all, including the non-teaching staff, who never counted hours as money but as service to a thriving community.

He recognised individual talents and nurtured them, challenging pupils to aim high

— not to pass an examination but as part of a continuing development which would extend to secondary school and beyond. He listened to his pupils and encouraged them to have a point of view. Instead of the normal speech day there was an open day each year, when every child was actively involved in a festival of art, drama, music and activity. The school grew from 70 pupils to over 350.

At the same time Malden was perturbed that his school was only for children whose parents could pay fees. He kept in touch with the maintained sector and was always ready to learn from it. While others were lamenting the lack of public funds to ease the transfer of pupils, the Maldens began raising money themselves. In 1971, with support from Raymond Cooper of the IAPS, he founded the Joint Educational Trust, which has enabled hundreds of children to move from the maintained sector to benefit from boarding in an independent school.

Although he contributed to a working party to change the Common Entrance examination, and sat for a short time on the IAPS council, Malden was not a committee man; he liked to spend his energies teaching and helping the staff and children in his own school. He cared deeply for the environment in which the children developed, and the tree planting scheme he created at Windlesham is a tribute to his memory.

He is survived by his wife Elizabeth and by their four daughters.

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PARENTS ATTACK TELEVISION
VIOLENCE IN SHOWS FOR CHILDREN
Criticism of children's television programmes as "naughty", "repulsive", "alien", "terror-making" and "frightening, debased adult stuff" from many of 300 parents who watched throughout October, was replied to last night by Sir Robert Fraser, director-general of the Independent Television Authority.
The criticisms were reported last night by Mr. E. Blisheim, a London secondary school teacher and author, at a meeting called by the Council for Children's Welfare in London. About 60 people were present.
Mr. Blisheim said the 300 parents were asked to watch by the council. "It is the Wild West that the main posse of parents is riding for. Too much fighting is the repeated verdict. 'I have a small son who, when I meet him, sticks out a left upper cut and says 'Whurr'. It is the television 'Good morning'. It is not individual acts of fighting but the great amount of violence that is objected to. Independent Television seems to be the principal offender in this matter.'"
Mr. Blisheim said there were many sugges-

ON THIS DAY
November 27, 1957
This discussion of violence on children's television took place 40 years ago; very little seems to have changed since then.
discussions of violence in television programmes, said last night: "Independent Television has never been in the slightest doubt of the immensity of its responsibilities towards the millions of children among its viewers and towards their parents, especially now that it is known that the overwhelming majority of children in 'able to choose' homes put their happiness in our hands during peak children's programmes."
This is why Independent Television began the first regular television service for schools in the British Commonwealth, and the first weekly religious discussion programmes in British television at a time when children and teenagers are still viewing...
After an analysis of children's programmes, he said: "It will be seen that Western and other adventure stories far from dominate this balanced output, amounting, in fact, to about a quarter... It is, of course, the policy of Independent Television to exclude scenes of agony and pitiless violence from such stories."
"But it is surely more far-reaching to ask what moral standards and attitudes are likely to be absorbed from them, and I do not doubt that the thoughtful person's answer must be that they teach selfishness, honesty, endurance and our duty to protect the weak."

PARENTS ATTACK TELEVISION
VIOLENCE IN SHOWS FOR CHILDREN
Criticism of children's television programmes as "naughty", "repulsive", "alien", "terror-making" and "frightening, debased adult stuff" from many of 300 parents who watched throughout October, was replied to last night by Sir Robert Fraser, director-general of the Independent Television Authority.
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Mr. Blisheim said the 300 parents were asked to watch by the council. "It is the Wild West that the main posse of parents is riding for. Too much fighting is the repeated verdict. 'I have a small son who, when I meet him, sticks out a left upper cut and says 'Whurr'. It is the television 'Good morning'. It is not individual acts of fighting but the great amount of violence that is objected to. Independent Television seems to be the principal offender in this matter.'"
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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 27 1997

RJB miners face job losses for Christmas

By Christine Buckley, Industrial Correspondent

AS MANY as 5,000 miners are likely to be told before Christmas that they have lost their jobs as RJB Mining closes up to ten deep mines.

RJB is expected to announce a massive restructuring within the next few weeks. Union leaders believe pressure from the workforce for information could push the company into an even earlier disclosure. RJB will assess its needs for collieries on Monday at a board meeting. There is likely to be a follow-up meeting shortly after that and then closures will be announced.

The moves follow the confirmation yesterday of a key three-year deal with National Power, the biggest electricity generator. That contract follows an arrangement with Eastern, the smallest of the three coal-burning generators, and leaves only sales to be agreed with PowerGen. Therefore, RJB has a strong indication of its future output and can begin plans to scale down its operation.

The closures will inflame an already heated backlash against the Government from its own backbenchers, supporters in the coalfield area, union leaders and the Conservatives.

John Battle, the Energy Minister, yesterday made his first clear gesture in recognition of coal industry complaints against the dash for gas in electricity generation. Mr Battle ordered Clare Spottiswoode, the gas regulator, to investigate take-or-pay deals for small electricity generators. But no quick action is likely on the issue. Ofgas yesterday said that it would launch the investigation within a few days as part of an overall look into the competitive market in gas.

South Yorkshire, where RJB is headquartered, could be hardest hit on a closure programme, along with Nottinghamshire. Maltby colliery, near Rotherham, where RJB has already stopped development work, is thought by industry experts to be high on a hit list.

So too is nearby Rossington, in Doncaster, which had been closed by British Coal when the industry was sold to RJB. Other collieries that could be closed include Clipston, near Mansfield, and Calverton, near Nottingham. Both of these had also been closed by British Coal.

Today union leaders and industry representatives will press Mr Battle and Michael Meacher, the Environment Minister, over Labour's action on coal and the energy industry. Labour had widely been expected to end the dash for gas in generation by putting a moratorium on new gas-fired power stations. Instead, it has given approval for six in the six months it has been in office. Industry experts estimate that reduces the demand for coal by six million tonnes.

Coal campaigners are pressing for interim measures to alleviate massive job losses. For example, they want the Government to order more stocks to be amassed by the generators.

Next week Mr Battle, the generators and representatives from the coal industry will be grilled by the Trade and Industry Select Committee in a hastily convened inquiry into the future of the coal industry.



Ian Maxwell avoided bankruptcy thanks to a last-minute payment of £500,000

Ian Maxwell sued over aid

By Jason Nisbet

IAN MAXWELL, who was last year acquitted of fraud in a trial that cost the taxpayer more than £30 million, is being sued by the Legal Aid Board for recovery of £50,000 that the government body claims he should never have been paid.

The legal costs of Ian and his brother, Kevin, ran up during their criminal trial were disclosed earlier this year as more than £4 million. However, the £50,000 at issue has nothing to do with the criminal trial — it was emergency legal aid granted to Ian Maxwell to fight bankruptcy proceedings brought against him by the liquidators of the Maxwell pension funds.

Ian Maxwell avoided bankruptcy thanks to a last-minute payment of £500,000 to the liquidators while Kevin was made bankrupt for more than £400 million, making him the largest bankrupt in this country.

The Legal Aid Board said that Ian Maxwell was not entitled to the payments he received. Neither he nor his lawyer, Kingsley Napley, were available for comment.

Chancellor's target cut for National Savings

By Anne Ashworth and Alasdair Murray

LACKLUSTRE sales at National Savings have caused the Chancellor to cut the agency's funding target by a third to £2 billion. The downward revision was included in this week's pre-Budget report.

In March, it was estimated that National Savings could contribute £3 billion to the Exchequer in 1997-98. National Savings schemes are failing to appeal to investors who can find better rates elsewhere.

Responding to charges that its rates were uncompetitive, National Savings moved yesterday to improve returns on some variable-rate schemes.

Announcing the increases which range from 0.25 per cent to 0.5 per cent, National Savings revealed that it had attracted only £826 million from investors in the first seven months of the year. But the agency, which has £50 billion plus of our money in its care, remains confident of attracting the £1.2 billion needed to meet its target before April.

Rates for Income Bonds will go up 0.25 per cent from January 8, giving a rate of 7 per cent on amounts under £25,000. The Investment Account rates will rise by up to 0.5 per cent, with balances of between £1 and £499 receiving a rate of 4.75 per cent.

It also emerged that the Chancellor's plans to overhaul the corporate tax system, revealed in the pre-Budget report, will ultimately save British businesses about £2 billion a year.

The Institute for Fiscal Studies described the move to abolish advance corporation tax (ACT) and cut mainstream corporation tax to 30 per cent as a "long overdue" simplification of the system. Once the new system is fully operational it will save businesses about £1 billion through the cut in corporation tax.

Companies that have high overseas earnings and low UK profits will save a further £1 billion a year as the problems caused by surplus ACT are ended.

But the IFS gave warning that during the transition period for the reforms, the corporate sector will pay £2 billion a year in extra tax due to the change in payment schedules.

At present companies pay about 40 per cent of their total tax bill in the form of ACT either during the year of shortly after the financial year end. The remaining 60 per cent of the bill is paid nine months after the year end.

But under the new system, companies will pay four roughly equal instalments resulting in higher tax payments before the year end.

The net effect will be to leave businesses paying about 130 per cent of their tax bill in 1998, although as the new system is phased in these surpluses will decrease. The Treasury should also profit as the more regular flow of corporation tax through the year will make public debt forecasts easier.

But the IFS was less supportive of other tax and benefit measures introduced by Gordon Brown. Andrew Dilnot, director of the IFS, said: "There was no clear direction on the reform of the welfare state. Some of the measures were no more than brightly coloured lollipops. The extra cash for pensioners is inconsistent with the Chancellor's other objectives."

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES		
FTSE 100	4851.2	(+27.7)
Yield	3.33%	
FTSE All share	2308.90	(+12.05)
Nikkei	18045.55	(+78.02)
New York		
Dow Jones	7822.13	(+13.18)
S&P Composite	554.81	(+3.35)
US RATE		
Federal Funds	5 1/4%	(5 1/4%)
Long Bond	100 1/4%	(101 1/2%)
Yield	6.06%	(6.05%)
LONDON MONEY		
3-month interbank	7 1/4%	(7 1/4%)
Libor 3m	11 1/4%	(11 1/4%)
5-year bill	10 1/4%	(10 1/4%)
STERLING		
New York	1.6787	(1.6787)
London		
\$	1.6710	(1.6808)
DM	2.5558	(2.5505)
FF	6.8408	(6.8323)
Sfr	2.3888	(2.3922)
Yen	112.84	(114.32)
S index	100.1	(103.5)
DOLLAR		
London		
DM	1.7855	(1.7480)
FF	6.8555	(6.8521)
Sfr	1.4180	(1.4125)
Yen	127.50	(127.30)
S index	100.1	(103.5)
Tokyo close Yen	127.28	
NORTH SEA OIL		
Brant 15-day (Feb)	\$18.80	(\$19.05)
GOLD		
London close	\$298.85	(\$301.85)
* denotes midday trading price		

NatWest sale

NatWest Group is within days of announcing a two-way sale of its troubled UK equities business, barring any last-minute mishaps. Bankers Trust is expected to buy the bulk of the equities business, with DMG taking derivatives.

Korea woe

Hyundai, the Korean electronics giant, is scaling back expansion plans at a site in Scotland. Page 28

Japan's economic crisis intensifies

By Richard Miles, Banking Correspondent

THE financial crisis in Tokyo deepened yesterday when a leading credit rating agency said it was reviewing the status of the Long-Term Credit Bank of Japan, one of the country's biggest and supposedly most stable banks.

LTCB was set up to provide long-term funding for Japanese industry. It recently agreed a partnership with SBC Warburg Dillon Read, the investment bank, which yesterday said that it could not fulfil.

Moody's Investors Service said the economic fundamentals of LTCB and four other banks, including Yasuda Trust, were very weak. Yasuda Trust said yesterday that it would increase its capital by ¥50 billion (£240 million) through the sale of headquarters and other real estate. Ryan O'Connell, a Moody's analyst in New York, said Japanese banks were moving out of the denial stage and tackling their problem loans.

Brokers also came under increased pressure in the aftermath of Yamaichi's failure. Daiwa Securities was forced to issue a statement denying any losses from *tobashi*, the practice of insulating favoured clients from bad loans.

Daiwa suffered a further blow when Japanese prosecutors charged Hironobu Sogame, a former vice-chairman, and two other former executives, in connection with alleged corporate racketeering. All the Big Four brokers have now been implicated in the *sokaiya* scandal.

As another financial institution collapsed — Tokai City, the regional bank — the Japanese authorities sought to calm investors by saying they were ready to use taxpayers' money to prop up the financial system. The Nikkei 225 Average closed up 1.1 per cent.

Sterling's strength hits trade

BRITAIN'S trade deficit ballooned in September, providing the first hard evidence that the strong pound is hitting exports. The global trade deficit increased from £16 billion to £25 billion, its highest level for nearly a year (Alasdair Murray writes).

The rise in the deficit was led by a 0.5 per cent fall in export volumes. Over the third quarter export volumes increased by 0.6 per cent compared with 4 per cent in the second quarter. Export prices also rose for the second consecutive month in September, suggesting that businesses are no longer able to trim margins to avoid losing sales.

The non-EU deficit for October narrowed slightly to £794 million from £817 million. Trade in services, published in a monthly format for the first time, showed a global surplus of £700 million for September.

Post Office to get financial freedom

By Philip Bassett, Industrial Editor

THE Government yesterday vowed to give full financial freedom to the Post Office to go hand in hand with the commercial freedom it has pledged to give the service.

Ian McCartney, Minister of State at the Trade and Industry Department, told the Commons Industry Select Committee that the Government would change the Post Office's financial structure as part of the current review of the organisation.

The move is a bow to evidence submitted by the Post Office, consumer groups and unions, which have insisted the organisation's funding is taken out of the Treasury's calculation of the public sector borrowing requirement.

It comes in spite of government unhappiness about the Post Office's 4 per cent pay deal with its employees.

Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, refused to comment precisely on the deal yesterday, but in the wake of his pre-Budget statement taking a tough line on pay, he insisted that such deals had to be reached with "moderation".

Mr McCartney insisted that the Post Office deal, revealed by *The Times* yesterday, was within government guidelines on public sector pay. According to the Post Office's main trade union, the Union of Communication Workers, the deal is worth about 4 per cent, including basic rate increases of 3.3 per cent and other changes.

Mr McCartney said the Post Office and others had pressed for its employees to be taken out of the scope of the Government's public sector pay guidelines.

He said that this was an important area of decision for the Government's review.

Guinness shareholders voice contempt

By Dominic Walsh



Greener: did not convince audience

DIAGEO, the name chosen by Guinness and Grand Metropolitan to consummate their £23 billion merger, has attracted considerable criticism in its short life. But when it came to voting the name change through at yesterday's extraordinary general meeting in London, shareholders of Guinness showed they could be just as caustic as the most cynical media commentators.

When Tony Greener, chairman of Guinness, invited questions from the floor, some shareholders were blunt to the point of rudeness. One said: "It's an absolute disgrace. I can't express my horror and disgust to have the so-called chairman of Guinness promoting a name that is not even in the

The Department of Trade report into the Guinness affair, commissioned in December 1986, will finally be published today after a lengthy delay. On page 30 we profile the City figures likely to feature in the DTI report. Jack Lyons, page 20

English dictionary." Another opined that it sounded like "some unmentionable stomach disease".

Another took issue not so much with the name but with the catchphrase that goes with it — "Every day pleasure everywhere". There are many things that offer pleasure every day, everywhere, he mused. "Like sexual intercourse." Perhaps, he asked Mr

Greener, shareholders could be allowed to vote on Sexual Intercourse as an alternative to Diageo.

Mr Greener kept a polite but firm grip on proceedings, but his argument that Guinness would remain as the name of "the world's favourite stout and my favourite pint" failed to convince the audience. When voting the audience was divided, requiring Mr Greener to call for a poll. Sadly, the sceptics' efforts were all in vain. Proxy votes showed 97 per cent in favour, with 99 per cent supporting the merger. A similar result from the earlier GrandMet meeting means the way is clear for Diageo to take its place on Stock Exchange screens on December 17.

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Katrina O'Hagan
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Rudolph Agnew relishes a takeover battle. This autumn he seemed to be almost inviting attack as he acknowledged that the sickly Redland share price made the group vulnerable. On Tuesday night, he was able to declare victory.

Redland's independence had been lost, but the price of 345p against the 25p where the shares were languishing before Lafarge responded to Agnew's implied challenge added up to honour saved.

Some shareholders might have hoped for more, particularly those who had been lured into Redland four years ago when the price easily topped £6. But by the time Agnew became involved at Redland, the skids had settled into place and he can regard the price squeezed out of the French group as a triumph. It is another notch on a corporate bow which is already well scored after four tussles within a decade.

That experience, ranging from saving Lasmo from the determined attack by Enterprise Oil to securing a good price for Cons-Gold shareholders, has taught Agnew the importance of timing. It is no coincidence that Lafarge was persuaded to pay up on the eve of Redland's publication of its final defence document.

Even with the help of the best spin doctors, that document might have been looking a little on the thin side as far as offering shareholders a rosy future. While

Rudolph of Redland reigns, dear



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

offering up the scalp of chief executive Robert Napier might have been seen as evidence of a determination to do better in the future, it was also a reflection on the dismal state into which Redland had deteriorated while he was at the helm.

In Napier's defence it can be said that building materials has not been the best of sectors to be in throughout the last decade, but others might not have found themselves in the unhappy position of having to amuse shareholders with a series of profit warnings. A chief executive who is both optimistic and unlucky is a fearful combination to set before fund managers.

Nonetheless, it appears to have been Napier who ensured that Lafarge was persuaded to up its bid on Tuesday night. Unable to rely on its own prospects of improving the business to fend off the French attack, Redland had set about deconstruction as an alternative defence. In particular, it sought to extricate itself from its troublesome German joint venture. Napier took on the role of persuading the Germans to buy out Redland and, in a remarkably short time, he succeeded in getting them to the brink of a deal. That was what persuaded Lafarge to

become a little more generous with its offer.

Perhaps, because of this, shareholders should not begrudge Napier too much of his payoff. As for Agnew, he must surely now feature on the very limited list of those City mercenaries who can be called on to fight in any interesting corporate battle. Up in Bradford, as Allied Colloids squares up against the American Hercules, they may be tempted to seek his advice.

Time to deliver for Post Office

The Post Office slipped in its pay rise just before the Chancellor of the Exchequer prepared to tell the nation of his insistence that pay rises should be "moderate". Quite what amounts to moderate he is unwilling to specify. Is the proportion to be judged by Cabinet Minister standards — a

40 per cent hike being widely acceptable in those quarters — or by the standards of the market place?

In the latter case, the Post Office decision seems quite moderate.

A 3.3 per cent increase in basic pay, increases in allowances on a similar scale and a lump sum payment of £55 is below many private sector increases.

But the Post Office, despite the wishes of its consecutive bosses, is not the independent body it would like to be. The previous Government shied away from privatisation for a variety of spurious reasons connected to what it saw as potential vote losses. The current administration is equally averse to full blooded privatisation.

Yet Sir Michael Heron, the Post Office chairman, is itching to be given the freedom to compete in the commercial world. Yesterday the Government indicated that it would give

him some limited financial freedom but that will still keep it firmly under the eyes of Gordon Brown, and his insistence that public sector pay should be kept within tight limits. He cannot have the Post Office encouraging other public sector bodies into bad ways.

But the Post Office has been increasing its efficiencies and an insistence that it should not be able to reward staff for their contributions in this direction would be unjust and, ultimately, counter productive.

There are still queues at Post Office counters but the services on offer once you reach the counters are ever-increasing. The latest idea is to help out banks such as Lloyds TSB and the Co-op by turning every PO into a branch office for them. The clearers benefit by being able to shut their branches, bringing down costs, while continuing to offer a bit of a service to customers through the Post Of-

fice. Girobank may have started out as just such a bright idea but this new incarnation could just work.

There is much more that it could, and should, be encouraged to do. But this sort of enterprise flourishes best in the private sector. New Labour should be able to come to terms with that proposition.

Short measures of justice

Among those struggling to plough through the Guinness report as it comes into the public domain this morning will be the gentlemen at the Securities and Futures Authority. The events covered in the document may have taken place a decade ago, before the SFA had even arrived on the scene, but Nicholas Durlacher and his team still have jurisdiction over some of those who were involved. They will have to decide whether there is a case for them to re-examine the roles of those who once put their skills to work on behalf of Ernest Saunders and his ambitions and are still practising in the City.

There will, inevitably, be a reluctance to reopen an episode that did the City so much damage. The prospect of a regulatory re-run of the fiasco that the Guinness trials degenerated into would be horrifying for all concerned.

But until the report, so long kept under wraps, has been fully perused, we should not rule out the prospect of the SFA deciding that it cannot sit back and do nothing simply because of the passing of years.

The report is likely to tell us that there was nothing terribly unusual about the way the Guinness battle was fought, that the City had long deemed share support operations the sensible way to ensure victory in contested bids.

On that basis, the players who have already been punished for their role in the affair may rightly claim to have been treated a little unfairly.

Ticket to rise
THE high spending Japanese tourist is likely to be an unusual sight around Europe's capital cities for the next few years, but the fall out from the latest Asian flu bout has not hurt Vendôme.

The company is continuing to demonstrate that there is a strong market for luxury goods if they come with the right brand label. And it seems that in the late 1990s, you can't beat a Beatles' daughter for bringing in the customers.

NatWest near to deal on equities sale

By RICHARD MILES, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

NATWEST GROUP is within days of announcing a two-way sale of its troubled UK equities business, barring any last-minute mishaps.

Bankers Trust, the US investment bank, is expected to buy the bulk of NatWest Markets' equities business, with Deutsche Morgan Grenfell taking the derivatives arm.

City analysts hope NatWest will obtain at least book value for the business, said to be about £500 million. An uncollected offer of £150 million from DMG earlier this month was dismissed as derisory.

NatWest Markets suffered a severe blow to its reputation earlier in the spring when a mispricing calculation in its options division forced the parent bank to write off £77 million. The event triggered a welter of speculation about the operation's future.

The bank has consistently denied that it intends to sell off the markets division, including the UK and continental

equities division. Its formal line is that NatWest Markets is being restructured under a new chief executive, Chip Kruger.

But, after Barclays sold the equities division of BZW, its investment bank, to Credit Suisse First Boston for £100 million at the beginning of October, NatWest has been beset by potential bidders who are convinced the investment banking arm is for sale.

NatWest refused last night to comment on reports that a sale of the equities business is imminent, but it is understood that discussions with Bankers Trust and DMG, the UK investment banking arm of Deutsche Bank, are ongoing. "It makes sense, and it would be a good fit for Bankers Trust," said one banker.

Any sale would raise significant questions about the remainder of NatWest Markets, particularly Hambro Magan, the merger and acquisitions boutique.

Vendôme shares leap as profits rise 30%

By CHRIS AVILES

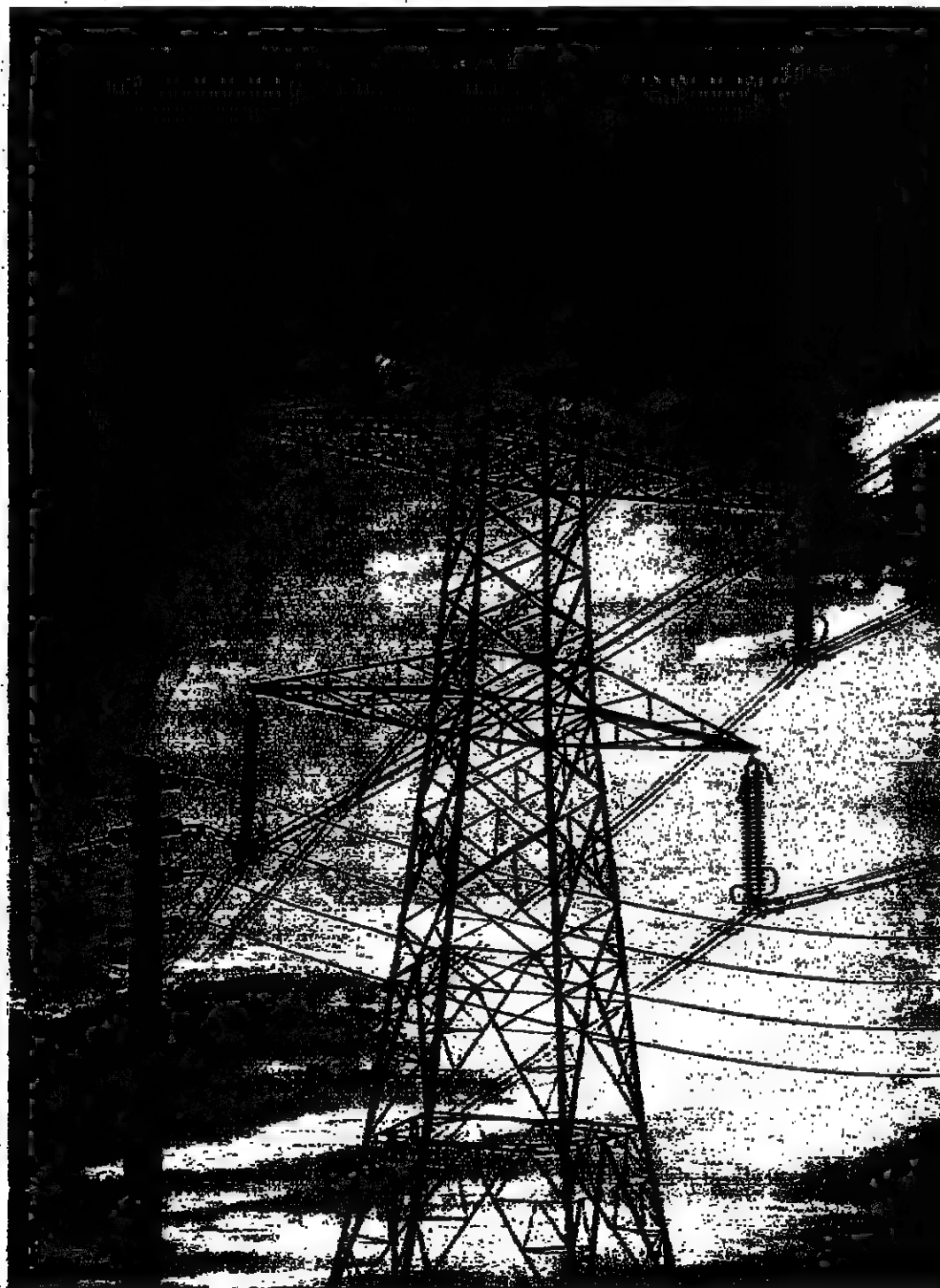
VENDÔME, the Anglo-Swiss luxury goods group which owns Chloé, the fashion house that recently appointed Stella McCartney as chief designer, saw its shares rise 42½p yesterday to 395p, after it reported a surge in international sales (See Commentary, this page).

The company, which makes Cartier watches, Dunhill men's

wear and Montblanc watches, saw turnover up 25 per cent in Europe, 18 per cent in the Far East and 31 per cent in the US.

The company reported a 30 per cent rise in pre-tax profit for the half year to September 30 to SF£279 million (SF£214 million). In sterling, profits rose only by 3 per cent to £117 million.

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Asian chaos may kill Clinton's 'big idea'



AMERICAN AGENDA
BRONWEN MADDOX

As leaders of the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (Apec) forum swallowed their last mouthfuls of Vancouver salmon and headed home yesterday, they issued an upbeat final statement. The 18 countries in the forum asserted that "financial stability and sustainable growth" were just round the corner in spite of three months of crisis.

In this exercise, in optimism, President Clinton appeared triumphant. Although he and Madeleine Albright, Secretary of State, avoided saying "I told you so", the crisis vindicates the US's repeated demands for Asia to open its markets, largely ignored during the 15 years of the Asian miracle.

But Mr Clinton himself is a less obvious victim of the crisis. The turmoil is likely to prove the death knell for his hopes of liberalising global trade, the closest policy he has to a Big Idea. His commitment led him to raise Apec to the status of a summit in 1993, to push through the Nafta trade pact with Mexico and Canada, and to help create the World Trade Organ-

isation. But the crisis now threatens that project, as well as economic growth, the two legacies he thought were safe.

One of the sources of the Asian crisis has been governments' encouragement of loans to fuel the construction boom that has left South-East Asian skylines dotted with partly empty skyscrapers. Loans struck in foreign currencies were inadequately supported by assets in the same currency, leaving lenders vulnerable as overvalued exchange rates fell. The fear that lenders would rush to sell assets pushed down stock markets; the spiral threatened to continue and to spread to other countries.

Whether this can be checked depends on whether the \$60 billion (£35.75 billion) rescue plan led by the International Monetary Fund can restore confidence. It also depends on whether Asian

governments acknowledge the role that corruption and special favours — the dark side of the Asian miracle — have played in the crisis. On both these points, Japan can play a critical role as a firebreak, if its authorities choose. The first test of whether the afflicted countries are willing to contemplate profound reform is their response to the US's call for more open markets in banking and insurance. The final Apec communiqué — which emphasised that all efforts are on a "voluntary basis" — said: "We undertake to work in a determined fashion to achieve a successful conclusion to WTO negotiations on financial services by December 12, 1997."

But US and Canadian officials yesterday were sceptical that this amounted to a commitment to allow more competition. Although more competition might have

helped to prevent the crisis, authorities may now feel it is too dangerous to take that step while they are trying to prop up their weaker financial institutions. Although Mr Clinton tried to keep the summit's attention at least partly on questions of trade,

not financial crisis, there are fears that governments will use the turmoil to justify protectionism and secrecy. Nor is Mr Clinton in a strong position to puncture this resistance, given the opposition he faces at home to trade liberalisation. It is now clear that one immediate effect of the crisis will be to increase America's trade deficit with Asian countries, already an explosive issue in Congress. Japan said this week that US fears were "reasonably accurate".

A widening deficit will make Mr Clinton's faint hopes of winning new powers to negotiate trade agreements even fainter. On the eve of the summit he was dealt an unexpected blow by Congress, which refused to grant him "fast-track" powers to negotiate trade deals without detailed amendment by itself. Democrats, opposed to fast-track powers on the

ground that it might cost American jobs, will seize on evidence of a widening deficit when Congress resumes in January.

The crisis is also likely to complicate Mr Clinton's attempt to get Congress's support for more funding for the IMF. Even though the bail-out of Mexico by the IMF and the US four years ago was successful, and the loans repaid, Congress remains antagonistic to the US's role in such rescues. Last week it turned down Mr Clinton's request for an additional \$3.5 billion for the IMF.

The Asian slump will also inevitably have an effect on US growth. Tentative estimates range from a 0.2 to 0.5 per cent impact on gross domestic product next year. Although cheaper imports will help to calm fears of inflation and further interest rate rises, the impact may take the shine off the economic boom that has under-

pinned Mr Clinton's popularity, and remains Vice-President Gore's best hope of reaching the White House in 2000.

Mr Clinton need not have been as politically vulnerable to the Asian crisis as he now appears. Had he been clearer in explaining what he intended to do with fast-track powers, he would have had a chance of focusing attention on the access America would gain in distant markets, rather than allowing it to diminish into an argument about losing jobs to Mexico. Had he resisted the temptation of equating national interests with a trade surplus, he would not be so vulnerable to these devaluations.

But the fact is that he is now associated, probably inextricably, with the failure of fast-track and with a widening trade deficit. A shock now given to the Asian economies may succeed in bringing about reform where Mr Clinton's lectures failed. In which case, he will see the seeds of his campaign bear fruit in some future president's term.

Today's 'great game' prompts oil and gas groups to get together

Recent deals obscure prolonged negotiation, says Carl Mortished



Deals such as Shell's with Gazprom could extend far beyond just the development of a Siberian oilfield

A century ago the imperial armies of Russia and Britain eyed each other suspiciously over the mountain ranges of Central Asia. British spies, disguised as merchants and holy men, fished from India through Afghanistan to Samarkand and Tashkent in the hope of obtaining early warning of the advance of Tsarist troops. Kipling described this high-altitude intrigue and skirmish as "the great game".

Today, Russia's armies are more concerned with quelling nationalist uprisings than with foreign adventure, but a century on there is a new great game being played in Central Asia by Western oil companies. So far, it is peaceful, but the stakes are much larger than a few square miles of territory, and this time Russia is the target of foreign waders. The struggle is for control of the vast energy reserves in Siberia and Central Asia.

Only weeks after Boris Yeltsin, the Russian President, announced that foreigners would be allowed to take control of Russian oil and gas companies, BP and Shell separately revealed that they had agreed strategic alliances with leading players in the Russian oil and gas industry. On Monday last week BP announced that it would buy 10 per cent of AO Sidanco, a Russian oil company, and fund a joint venture development of Kovyktinskoye, a massive gas condensate field in Eastern Siberia.

Just as BP announced its \$750 million (£430 million) investment, Shell said that it had entered into an alliance with RAO Gazprom, the Russian gas utility. Shell is to subscribe for \$1 billion in convertible bonds issued by Gazprom and the two companies will jointly develop oil and gas liquids from the Zapolyarnoye field in Western Siberia.

Last week's flurry of activity

obscures the prolonged diplomatic courtship that made these deals possible. It also ignores the possibility that Shell's deal with Gazprom could go far beyond just the development of a Siberian oilfield. Even by Shell's standards, Gazprom is a monster. It owns 30 per cent of the world's known gas reserves, seven times the hydrocarbon assets of Shell and Exxon combined. Last year Gazprom supplied almost a fifth of the gas consumed in Western Europe, with Germany and France relying on Russia for more than a third of their gas consumption.

If Shell wants access to Russia's energy wealth, Gazprom too has imperialistic ambitions and is keen to reach further downstream in Europe in search of markets — the Russian company already has a joint venture with Germany's Wintershall and a stake in the UK-Netherlands gas interconnector. With rising demand for clean fuel, the Russians see a tremendous opportunity. Hence, Gazprom's \$12 billion investment in the Yamal pipe-

line linking Siberia with Germany. But Gazprom lacks cash — the company is plagued with bad debts because of its social obligations to bankrupt Russian communities.

This is where Shell comes in. The company has been in talks, on and off, with Gazprom for ten years. Cor Herkströter, chairman of the Anglo-Dutch oil group, explains: "We started talking in the late 1980s. At the time they didn't know anybody outside the Soviet Union. Gazprom was so big and bureaucratic. It took a long time to develop a relationship and discover each other's qualities."

The problems are as much political as cultural. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Western oil companies have been engaged in an elaborate dance with Russia, but even now investors are deterred by the absence of a legal system that gives comfort to Western capitalists. There are still doubts about the security of production-sharing contracts in Russia — a standard arrangement in the oil industry which shares out the proceeds

from each barrel of oil between the state and the oil company. The necessary laws have been blocked by Communists in the Russian Parliament, but the alternative solution chosen by BP and Shell — joint ventures with local companies — is not entirely satisfactory, as Shell could easily testify. The latter struggles in Nigeria with a joint venture partner that is heavily in arrears on its share of development costs.

Shell and BP have been forced to swallow hard and accede to Russian demands for cash bonuses as a precondition to any oil deal. BP is buying shares in a company with a poor production record — the result of a decade of low investment. Meanwhile, Shell is restructuring a Gazprom bond issue that was due to be launched in November but was postponed after the Asian financial crisis. Emerging markets are not flavour of the month and rumours suggested that the US would object to American support for the Gazprom issue; the Russian company being a part-

ner in the Iranian South Pars gasfield development. Coincidentally, Shell is reputed to be keen to find its own route into the vast Iranian gasfields.

However, Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, which helped to put together the Gazprom-Shell alliance, says the \$2 billion bond issue will go ahead next year with the support of Goldman Sachs, the US investment bank, and participation by Shell to the tune of \$1 billion. Mr Herkströter is philosophical about the cost to Shell of supporting Gazprom's debt issue. "Call it a modern way of exploring for oil and gas," he said. "Oil exploration is always risky. You invest dollars in something you don't know is there. In this case we invest dollars in something we know is there."

The West's big integrated oil companies are desperate for low-risk growth opportunities, and Shell, which failed to increase its production in the past quarter, is no exception. What Shell gets from Gazprom is up to 250,000 barrels per day from a field in Eastern Siberia; equivalent to about 10 per cent

of Shell's current worldwide production.

But even as the ink dries on the agreement, oil companies look to the next deal and beyond. The alliance is ostensibly about raising Gazprom's unexploited oil reserves from the ground, but the longer-term attraction of Gazprom for Shell is that the combination of the Russian company's resources and Shell's expertise and financial muscle offer endless possibilities. The two partners are linking up with Lukoil, another Russian oil company, to bid for the \$2 billion privatisation of Rosneft, which has big reserves in Northern Siberia. Gazprom and Shell are discussing a gas pipeline from the Caspian region to the Black Sea and into Turkey, which is hoping to double its gas imports by 2005. China is crying out for energy, and Siberia is the nearest big source of gas. And then there is Europe.

While British and American oil company executives sat in Moscow puzzling over the Byzantine politics of the collapsing Russian empire, Gazprom was sending its troops west in search of cash, markets and better profit margins. The Russians want to get closer to European consumers but they face opposition from protectionist European state gas monopolies. They also face stiff competition from Shell and others pumping gas out of the North Sea. Meanwhile, Algerian gas is arriving in Spain and Italy through sub-sea pipelines and, soon, Nigerian liquefied natural gas will reach Mediterranean ports.

The partners insist that this is all about Russian oil, and in the near term the investment will go into Siberian oilwells, but even now there are other opportunities. Mr Herkströter said that marketing alliances would not be excluded. "It is a very wide-ranging agreement. We will study all projects that make sense." These would include gas swaps. Rather than importing Siberian gas and incurring pipeline tariffs, Shell would swap North Sea gas into the system.

The sight of the two largest players in Europe's gas market forming an alliance is intriguing, to say the least. It could have ramifications that even the partners don't imagine. It is in every sense a great game.

Confessions of a short-termist

Graham Searjeant queries the Chancellor's call for virtue

The shame of it. According to Gordon Brown "we must all be long-termists now". If only it were true. The trouble is that those who took the long view from the 1970s to the 1990s have long since been driven out of business. Those who survived have been forced to cleave to a less intellectually appealing but more pragmatic line. Most of British business is now run by people who learnt the hard way. It will take more than soundbites from the Chancellor and his entourage to change hearts and minds.

Being a long-termist is never easy. You had that cosy feeling of virtue but in the City, at least, you were marked out as a wet, long before Margaret Thatcher's spin doctors thought of the term. When people were making money out of asset-stripping, only killjoys complained that this was at the economy's capacity to grow. When take-over kings created cash and cut costs, it seemed churlish to complain that research, long-term investments and costly expansion into new markets were being sacrificed.

Some of us clung to this virtuous view, pointing to the difference between Anglo-Saxon and Asian or continental ways. But we had to admit that those who looked after today would more likely prosper tomorrow. Starting in enlightenment, we saw the darkness.

The ghost of Lord Keynes had something to do with it. His famous put-down, insisting that "in the long term we are all dead", was part of a theoretical debate. Classical economists insisted that slumps or shocks were detours on the road to long-run equilibrium, where adjustments in wages ensure jobs for all and interest rates would equate savings with the returns to be earned from investment. The

long run, as Lord Keynes showed, had no relevance to the actual decisions facing entrepreneurs and consumers.

Long-term equilibrium is never reached because of events, dear boy, events. That is seared on managers' minds by recessions, notably in 1974, 1981 and 1992-93.

IC's greatest long-term planner reached the chair just as the early 1980s slump submerged manufacturing in short-term emergency. A decade later, one top insolvency practitioner told companies to focus on survival even if that meant wrecking long-term prospects. It was great advice. Why have a great future if you go bust next week. Many of the greatest long-term property developments, from olden times to Canary Wharf, have ruined their promoters because short-term changes in interest rates and property values got in the way.

Financial markets are becoming ever more short-term and who is to say they are wrong. The trend of investors, managers and even utility regulators is to join them rather than try to beat them. Groups that saddle themselves with long-term overheads are likely to be outsmarted in the short-term and bought by those who care first for cash flow.

Short-term values have been driven by uncertainty, Gordon Brown is right to offer business the greatest possible incentive to long-term vision: a stable economic environment of continuous growth, low inflation and relatively stable interest rates. That is his motive for joining the euro.

Those who have become short-termists by experience will still take some convincing. The new long-termist anti-inflationary world order still seems to have no answer to the short-term shock of recession.

Bah, humbug!

A SERIOUS outbreak of the Scrooge spirit down at Canary Wharf. BZW pensioners learn that the Credit Suisse purchase means a change of name for their former employer, and no corporate diary this year. Quite why a diary labelled BZW is less practical for recording appointments than one labelled Barclays Capital, I cannot say. But it gets worse. The traditional Christmas Carol Service at Southwark Cathedral has been cancelled "due to commitments aris-

ing from the reorganisation of the business coupled with the lack of easy transport to the Cathedral". Hopefully there will be a service next year, by which time transport problems in South London will miraculously have been solved. I suppose. And there is no Christmas hamper this year, just a special payment of £50 with the December pension. And a happy Christmas to the lot of you.

● I HAVE news for all those commuters who wonder why the train service into Waterloo is so poor. It is run by a Romanian mobile phone company. Romania. I am amazed to learn, now has two mobile phone operators, so presumably at least two mobile phones. They are called Connex and Dialog. But aren't these names somewhat familiar? Connex is a privatised rail operator with a lousy reputation, and Dialog is Dan Wagner's MAID, now it is merged with Knight Ridder.

The awful possibility dawns that those overpaid corporate identity specialists have run out of new company names and are having to recycle old ones. There is a world name shortage. And there are two new Romanian mobile phone licences about to be awarded, once two more mobile phones have arrived. One of which they will probably call Dialog.



"I'm sorry — when you said Dialog, I thought you were joking"



Chicken run

FLIPPIN' heck, what's this from 'Halifax'? Yes, I know assumed regional accents are a cheap laugh, but the Halifax has so long prided itself on its down-to-earth image and local roots that I am surprised to learn of its new general manager, marketing. (We will tip-toe gently around the question of whether the Halifax needs something called a general manager, marketing.) Philip Hanson is managing director for Europe at Tricon restaurants, until October part of PepsiCo, as in Pepsi Cola. Which means he used to run Pizza Huts and Kentucky Fried Chickens. Now he will bring his "experience of

both the consumer and retail sectors" to the Halifax. One hopes both will survive the inevitable culture shock.

Korea-enhancing

A VOTE of confidence in the City as a world financial centre from a fast-growing international bank and a country that is a huge source of inward investment into the UK, reports the Corporation of London. The bank's representative office here is being upgraded to a branch, and the official opening is tomorrow. Not the best of timing, perhaps for the Housing and Commercial Bank of Korea.

● HARD to believe he needs the money, but Ian Schrager, the man who survived Studio 54 and jail on tax evasion charges to become the hippest hotelier of the 1990s, is touting his two-month-old daughter Ava Louis as a child model. A glossy brochure reaches me. "Hair: dark brown (like mother's)," it says. Mother is former ballet dancer Rita Norona — oh, land of opportunity where you can be a ballet dancer and be called Rita! "Disposition: angelic. Special conditions: no nudity and no speaking or walking parts."

Westwood ho

WOMEN'S fashion is a closed book to me, but I do know that Vivienne Westwood has achieved renown for



Westwood: headed off challenge from a pest killer and Guinness

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The Guinness Affair

Cast waits on reviews of the DTL report

THIS morning the Department of Trade and Industry report into the Guinness affair will at last see the light, more than a decade after police were first called into investigate one of the most spectacular takeovers in the City had seen. Those who figure in it have already had the chance to read what the Government inspectors have to say, but today brings the first opportunity for others to read the account of what really took place as Guinness, led by Ernest Saunders, the chief executive, struggled to win the prize of the Distillers Company. The cast list is a long one. Here we introduce some of the people who are likely to feature in the report. Some of them are at the top of the City pyramid, others have changed direction. All will be waiting to learn the reaction of today's more closely regulated City to those events of ten years ago, and their part in them. Reports by Jason Nisid, Martin Walker and Anne Ashworth.

LORD ROTHSCHILD

LORD ROTHSCHILD, 61, was running J Rothschild Holdings in 1986, which bought £25 million of Guinness shares at a critical time in the Distillers bid. Today he is best known as chairman of the National Heritage Memorial Fund. This year has seen the death of two of his closest friends, Diana, Princess of Wales, and Sir James Goldsmith. In 1989, with Sir James, Lord Rothschild mounted an unsuccessful bid for BAT, the tobacco group. Just nine years earlier, he had broken away from NIM Rothschild, the family bank, after a bitter feud with his cousin Evelyn. The other principal events in Lord Rothschild's varied career include the establishment in 1991 of J Rothschild Assurance (JRA), the life office, run by Sir Mark Weinberg and Michael Wilson. This year, Prudential spent £40 million increasing its stake in St James' Place Capital (SJPC), the life assurance group that owns JRA. Lord Rothschild is now the group's president. Careful of the prestige of his family name, Lord Rothschild inserted a clause in the SJPC contract ensuring that "J Rothschild" could be removed from JRA's name, if it were necessary to protect the clan's reputation.

DAVID MAYHEW

IF PARNES, Saunders and others have claimed to have been broken by their involvement in the Saunders affair, David Mayhew has emerged unscathed. He remains a senior partner at Cazenove & Co, the stockbroker that advised Guinness during the Distillers takeover and stood loyally by its employee throughout, even to the extent of paying more than

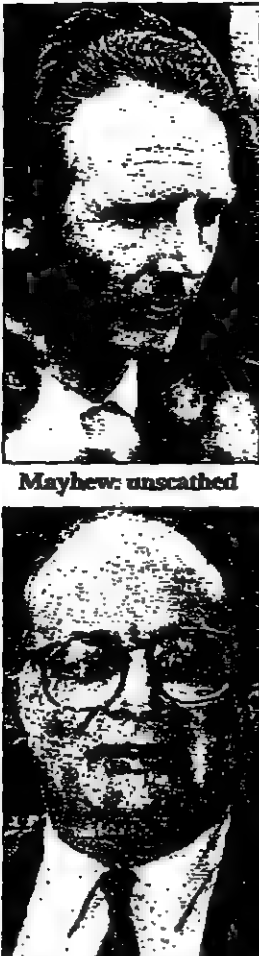
£2 million in legal fees. Cazenove is famed as the Queen's stockbroker, and Mayhew remains at the heart of the City establishment. Cazenove even issued a statement confirming its support for him. An Old Etonian, Mayhew joined the stockbroker Panmure Gordon almost four decades ago and became a partner of Cazenove in 1969. In 1992 the third Guinness trial, in which he was charged on two counts under the 1985 Companies Act and one for fraud, collapsed when the Serious Fraud Office dropped all charges after the defence put forward fresh evidence. This was never revealed, but the SFO said it meant evidence in the case as a whole was not sufficient to provide a "realistic prospect" of a conviction, and Mayhew was formally acquitted.

OLIVIER ROUX

OLIVIER ROUX was the finance director of Guinness whose evidence in the trial helped to convict Ernest Saunders, his former boss, as well as Anthony Parnes, Gerald Ronson and Jack Lyons. The Marseille-born management consultant from Bain & Co was 35 when he was brought in by Saunders to help to deal with the rapid growth of Guinness, which had just taken over Bells in an aggressive deal when it made the bid for Distillers. Roux was central to the share support operation and detailed it in evidence in the Guinness trial. Though he denied being given immunity, Roux was never prosecuted for his role in the scandal. After leaving Guinness, he became a consultant for Talisman Management, the firm set up by Rick Grogan and David Hoare, two former Bain colleagues who



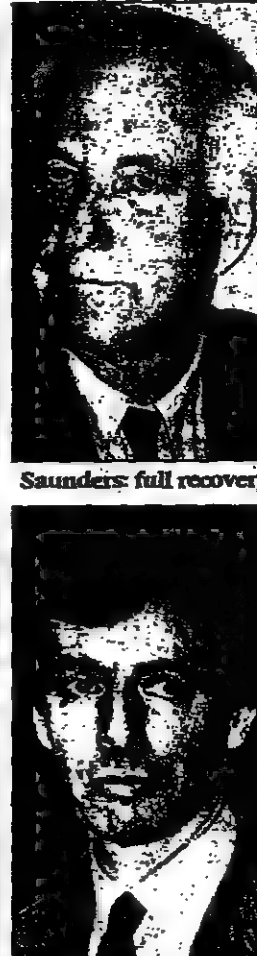
Parnes: "The animal"



Spens: penniless claim



Rothschild: £25m buy



Saunders: full recovery



Ronson: "I was stupid"

also advised Guinness. Talisman has been involved in a series of high-profile deals, most recently at Laura Ashley, where Hoare has become chief executive. It also backed the management buyout of Cope Altman, the packaging group, whose former finance director, Philip Yes, last year became finance director of Guinness.

ERNEST SAUNDERS

SEVERAL of the Guinness protagonists have bounced back spectacularly, in career terms. But none can match the extraordinary medical recovery achieved by Ernest Saunders. In 1990 he was jailed for five years for fraud. A year later the Court of Appeal heard from a respected neurologist that the master salesman was suffering from pre-senile dementia, and he was released a few weeks later, having served ten months. A grey-faced, shambling figure,

Saunders was in court to hear that his brain was abnormally small for a man still only in his mid-50s. Today Saunders is in demand as a consultant to a number of businesses such as Carphone Warehouse. He has a house and office in southwest London and a country home in Sussex. He has even toyed with the 1990s fashion accessory for the successful executive, a football team, having made an unsuccessful consortium bid for Queen's Park Rangers. At the end of last year his case at the European Court of Human Rights succeeded. Saunders had claimed that Department of Trade and Industry inspectors breached his right to silence by forcing him to answer their inquiries on the Distillers takeover. His next action will be against the Government, for damages and a declaration of his innocence. Success would be the ultimate come-back for the man once known as "Deadly Ernest".

HEAD of corporate finance at Henry Ansbacher, Guinness's merchant bank, at the time of the Distillers bid, Lord Spens was forced to give up the job by the Bank of England, which has since cleared his name and awarded him a £365,000 in legal costs he incurred before being awarded legal aid and claimed he was left penniless — he was even forced to sell his stamp collection. His case for damages against the Bank continues.

ROGER SEELIG

ROGER SEELIG was not supposed to be Guinness's adviser at Morgan Grenfell. But the high-flying merchant bank was so busy in 1986 that he was drafted in to lead the team. Seelig was considered to be one of the City's leading corporate financiers and with George Magan had established Morgan Grenfell's reputation as the place to go if you wanted to make an aggressive bid. Headvised the likes of Habitat, United Biscuits, Dixons, Virgin and

Court battle for a formal acquittal nine months later. But he was not awarded the £365,000 in legal costs he incurred before being awarded legal aid and claimed he was left penniless — he was even forced to sell his stamp collection. His case for damages against the Bank continues.

BURTON

BURTON. When charged with 12 offences, his £500,000 bail was funded by Sir Terence Conran and Paul Hamlyn, of Octopus books. Seelig defended himself, breaking down and being declared mentally unfit to carry on. Since then, Seelig has continued a modest career as an adviser to companies. The Guinness scandal claimed the jobs of three senior executives at Morgan Grenfell, hitting the reputation of the bank which weakened by an expensive move into securities trading, was taken over by Deutsche Bank.

THE GUINNESS affair cost Anthony Parnes a two-year spell in Ford Open Prison, of which he served 11 months, but it did broadcast his City nickname, "The Animal", because of his belligerent and aggressive manner

GERALD RONSON

IN THE 1980s Gerald Ronson was described by Sir John Quinlan, then chairman of Barclays Bank, as the country's finest businessman. A couple of years later he was in jail and shortly after that his Heron property empire collapsed under the weight of massive debts and speculative investment in Arizona savings and loan organisations. Ronson built his business from a small chain of petrol stations to one of the most influential property companies in Britain and Spain. He enjoyed his wealth, driving around in a white Bentley, marrying Gail Cohen, the model, and naming his yacht My Gail, after her. He kept Heron private, but actively traded in the stock market, usually through his friend Anthony Parnes. When Parnes asked him to join the share support operation, Ronson took heart from the fact that the crime of the City establishment — Morgan Grenfell, Cazenove and Freshfields — were advising the company. When he was jailed for a year and fined £5 million he merely said: "I was stupid." Released from jail, he attempted to sue his Heron empire and, while he could not, he led a team to buy control again, which succeeded in doing so last year.

How to serve tomorrow's world

Ed Smith on the fight to maintain UK accountancy's global leadership

THE UK accountancy profession is the envy of many developed and developing countries. It remains a highly attractive option as a route into global and national business for the brightest and best from our universities, and, as evidenced by current shortages in the major firms, there is huge demand to recruit people from the Big Six firms and the profession as a whole. The reason is that UK accountants are extremely good at what they do and have, over many years, worked hard to respond to changing markets and shareholders' demands.

However, there is a stark choice ahead. Unless the profession, and in particular the big, global players, increase the pace of supporting clients' changing markets and demands for new services and enhanced skills, the value of our profession is in danger of slipping. The leadership and respect on the world stage that we have worked so hard to achieve could be lost for ever.

Why might this happen? Quite simply, the new demands of the market for our services and for top people are changing. To meet these changes we need to invest, invest and invest. If we do not, our business will atrophy and lose relevance.

Every day we read about the inexorable globalisation of trade and the consolidation of

industry. As a result, we see demands from investors and management for greater assurance on the data they use, and on the underlying management of risk in organisations. It is to us that they turn to meet these needs.

Much of the growth over the next 20 years in this global assurance market will come in the developing economies of Asia as the demand for capital and consequential investor protection explodes in the new millennium. Who will create the professions in these new economies if it is not those who run strong professions today? Who built the professions as Eastern Europe opened up in the first half of the 1990s? We did, of course, ably supported by local nationals.

Shareholders and management have already benefited from the assurance they get on the stewardship of their investments. We had to be there almost before our clients — ready to meet their needs. If we had been constrained in our investment capability (and the cost was modest when set against the needs of markets of the future), investors' and management's risks would have been higher, potentially changing their cost of capital or risk-adjusted investment appraisal. It should be inconceivable to shareholders, other investors' and management that strong professions in assurance are not created in these new mar-



Ed Smith says investment is vital to meet new demands

kets — but that can only happen with our ability to finance expansion and create the critical mass of resource to respond at the required level of skill and quality.

Closer to home is the rapid emergence of new business paradigms, such as electronic commerce. Do stakeholders and management understand the risks in this new trading environment and in the new investor information that is being created? Are these risks, if understood, being controlled?

What assurance is there? In Coopers & Lybrand alone, we are talking of investments of \$200 million to \$400 million to research, develop and implement assurance services on a global scale in some of these new areas.

With our core competencies of analysis, business and risk control design and review, backed up by expert judgment and independence from the transaction? Information flows, we are very well placed to provide the markets with

what they want. Our speed of doing so depends on our investment capability and the return on that investment. A loss of timely response will expose investors and management to higher risk.

And so to tomorrow's business leaders at home and playing our part on the global stage. The accountancy profession will be attractive to the brightest and best only if it plays on an equal footing with other global organisations. If it provides the intellectual stimulus and a broad range of experience, and if it allows the development of CVs that ambitious young people regard as a necessary and integral component of employment.

We must be positioned to respond to the challenges about the future value of our qualification. We have created, through our focus on the development of a leading professional and excellent workplace experiences, the cadre of potential business leaders enjoyed not just by UK businesses but by many parts of the world. We will continue to do so only so long as the profession, led by the global firms, invests in new ideas, new markets and new skills.

We must compete successfully in the markets of the future and maintain the leadership of the UK profession on the world stage. Like many of the investments made by large sections of UK business, education and government, there is too much at stake to fail.

The author is Head of Business Assurance Strategy at Coopers & Lybrand

The same nettles still need to be grasped

OVER the past week all 112,000 members of the UK's premier accountancy body, the English ICA, will have received a letter from the president, entitled "Forging a New Partnership with Members". It is the council's response to the report that it commissioned last year from Peter Gerrard, the well-known lawyer.

Consider this: "Our vision of the form which the institute should take over the next 20 years is based on changes in structure and changes in style. First and foremost, we see an overriding need not simply to maintain the technical excellence of the institute but to ensure its relevance to members whether in practice or in industry."

"We also see a need for a structure which clearly recognises that members have sectional interests derived from the work which they do, as well as one that provides a framework for debate about both professional and technical issues."

That, by and large, is what the letter sent out to members says. But the section that I have just quoted does not come from it. Instead, it comes from the chairman's foreword to what was known as the Worsley report. It, too, examined the governance of the institute and made recommendations. But it was published in 1985.

Nothing, it seems, has really changed. The press briefing on the new response was quite remarkable. It was extremely difficult to pin down anything that was different from what has always happened at the institute. Chris Laine, the president, even opened by saying that the response was "about style and culture as much as it is about physical structure", which is more or less exactly what Jock Worsley was saying some dozen or so years ago.

None of the obvious changes have been tackled. Gerrard reflected the view that having a council of some 93 members was less than effective. But no action to reduce the number is proposed.

In fact, the response simply accepts that the council is a shambling, but there is nothing, given the different interests involved, that can be done. "Once a body increases beyond a relatively small size, the number of its members becomes irrelevant," says the response.

If you take that to its logical conclusion, then there is no reason why all of the institute's 112,000 members should not be on the council. Meetings would have to be held

in Hyde Park or the Albert Hall and to be perfectly honest would be just as effective as the current meetings are, as well as much more fun.

The only other discernible changes are equally negligible. There is a proposal that the president should no longer chair council meetings on the grounds that in some cases it would be less than accountable to have the president chairing both the executive and the council. An "impartial" chairman — drawn from the council — is proposed. This impartial chairman would be expected to act much as the Speaker does in the House of Commons.

The idea of having a director-general is once again kicked into touch. Instead of the current secretary and chief executive roles, it is proposed to create a "new post of secretary-general".

But the Gerrard proposals that such a person should have considerable powers and the ability to set the agenda in the public eye are spurned. "We do not believe that the secretary-general should be responsible for external public relations and relations with members as envisaged by Gerrard," says the response. "That is a job for the president. But the secretary-general would have particular responsibility for maintaining contact with Government and other professional bodies."

Although it is not obvious, the idea is that the new post would change to what was described as "a more commercial focus", while the office holders did more of the work of liaison with members.

This seems unlikely. As the outside world gets busier, presidents already have much less time for even the priority jobs, let alone pressing the flesh in what they see as the farther-flung counties of England and Wales. But members should not be downcast. And nor should they start to stockpile the rotten fruit just in case their president comes riding by.

As the similarity with the Worsley report shows, the grip on what needs to change is there. It is just that implementation is often extremely difficult. But the current triumvirate of office-holders has shown distinct signs of being able to grasp the odd nettle quite firmly. If anything, the fact that the response to Gerrard is bland gives them a great deal of room for manoeuvre as they seek to tighten up the organisation and implement effective change.



ROBERT BRUCE

Andersen gets in the grove

AMID the merger mania among top accountancy firms the significance of this month to Arthur Andersen has been rather forgotten. To emphasise its off-repeated argument that mergers are a disaster and only organic growth produces success, the firm has decided to commemorate the occasion by planting trees. Under the auspices of the Woodland Trust it is planting 450 deciduous trees

in Birdwell Wood near Barnsley. The trees, which represent the number of current and retired UK partners, will form Arthur Andersen Grove. Jokes about partners not being able to see the wood for the trees are not welcome.

Nice little runner

THE latest report from the English ICA's technical direc-

torate is a colourful and impressive publication. But institute insiders find the cover illustration significant. Under the banner "Making the Running" it depicts an athlete striding out with determination. Surely there can be no connection to the fact that Graham Ward of Price Waterhouse, the technical directorate's chairman, is letting it be known he is a front-runner for

the forthcoming elections for vice-president.

Revenue dummies

FINANCIAL advisers at Norton Partners, near Bristol, have come up with a self-assessment tale that may bring a smile to the face of the Inland Revenue but is likely to cause chaos for taxpayers. It seems that some taxpayers may have received

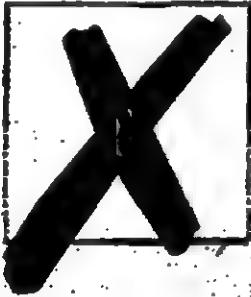
up to three tax returns. What most people would do is fill one out and chuck the others away. As Norton Partners makes clear in its latest newsletter: "If you destroy the extra returns without notifying the Inland Revenue that it is a duplicate, you will receive a penalty notice shortly after January 31, 1998." Fines start at £100. The old claim of dummy employees has been replaced with dummy taxpayers. And this time the Revenue wins.

ROBERT BRUCE

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London's pride has been hand-me-down

Geoff Brown on a 1997 London Film Festival that promised much but delivered little for the struggling cinema professional

Rank the following options in order of importance to you. The London Film Festival is important because: 1) it shows British films; 2) it shows previews of new big-budget Hollywood films; 3) it shows films from all over the world; 4) there are actors and filmmakers present; 5) it shows films that may never be seen again in this country.

The words come from a questionnaire available to audiences at the festival, organised by the British Film Institute, which ended on Sunday. How good a time you had at the event partly depended on your priorities. Previews of new big-budget Hollywood films? There were none on display; there rarely are. Instead there was a range of low-to-middle-budget offerings, some impressive (*Affliction*, *The Ice Storm*, *Afterglow*), a few quite awful (*Uncognito*, which must have been booked sight unseen).

British films? They were here, although the selection generated none of the excitement you might expect in the year of the lottery boom. The cream had been seen at Edinburgh and Venice; the most striking entry, Carine Adler's edgy, grief-stricken *Under the Skin*, is now playing commercially (and reviewed on the facing page). Films that may disappear from sight? Here there were numerous pickings, from India, Pakistan, Spain, Africa, Japan, Korea, China and Taiwan, as well as places closer to home. Happy audiences took the chance to see Prakash Jha's *The Death Sentence*, an intriguing hybrid (half commercial, half arty) that banged the drum for women's rights. Some fell under the spell of Bruno Dumont's dispassionate study of aimless rural life, *La Vie de Jésus*. Some cheered the Tarantino-esque gambols of Graham Guit's *Shooting Stars* (if it were a football game the result would be 5-0, Content 0). Others attempted Godard's *For Ever Mozart* (Pretension 5, Achievement 1).

None of these films is guaranteed commercial showings in Britain: even if they were, they would be gone in the blink of an eye.

Other festival offerings will emerge again. February sees the release of *The Woodlanders*, although I fear what Thomas Hardy's novel will do to audiences in the depths of winter. At first Phil Agland's film, written by David Rudkin, behaves like a Monty Python sketch, cluttered with rustics in the greenwood. But it soon thins out, and offers a performance from Emily Woolf so strong and affecting that her mismatched marriage to a dashing doctor becomes a matter for our tears. Overall, Agland makes Hardy's Wessex seem as remote and strange as the places he visited for his TV documentaries on Africa and China.

Further ahead, there will be chances to revisit Gregg Araki's *Nowhere*, a crazy carnival of teenage angst and pop culture set in Los Angeles. Language and action are equally colourful, although as James Duval, Rachel True and the young cast race around acting alienated and libidinous, one yearns for Araki to cook something more substantial than hip fast food.

Some festival films gave you that déjà vu experience. Henry Jaglom actually called his *Déjà Vu*. Two married people meet in Europe by chance and feel their destinies linked: one is Victoria Foyt (Jaglom's muse and co-writer), the other is Stephen Dillane. Awkwardness and unfruitful whimsy beset many scenes. But then, suddenly, Jaglom will produce a zinger: tart comedy with Anna Massey and Noel Harrison arguing in bed; a moving exchange between Vanessa Redgrave and her mother, Rachel Kempson; a scene between Foyt and Dillane that cuts through the situation's triteness to find naked truths. If Jaglom's unevenness is the price we must pay for his dedication to documenting real feelings, it is worth paying.

As in past years, the festival gave space to film restorations from the world's archives. The most spectacular was *Michel Strogoff*, with Ivan Mosjoukine, a spectacular showcase for the Russian émigrés working in France during the 1920s. The most scary was *Nosferatu*, this year's presentation by Photoplay Productions and Channel 4, which surrounded Murnau's haunting images of a spindly Dracula, cutting his teeth on the best necks around, with a rousing score by the Hammer veteran James Bernard.

By and large, festival audiences probably had a better time than journalists and delegates. Some of our grievances — a poor support system, a fee charged for a festival catalogue previously supplied free — will be of little interest. But others involve issues fundamental to the festival's health. London's festival has always been cursed by having no large central meeting-place for press, industry and filmmakers. This year's solution, a few policy rooms at the Groucho Club, was the worst yet.

Film people attending a festival, much more than critics, need to feel cherished: this year the administration went overboard eating up money, courting glamorous publicity by shining a spotlight on the talent and films that needed no promoting, casting the rest into darkness. American Express, the festival's main sponsors, must have been very pleased. But it is hard to see any struggling young director, or the demoralised and overworked staff at the British Film Institute, smiling alongside.

All in all, this year's edition can only further stimulate arguments over the festival's future, and strengthen the hand of Sheila Whitaker and others calling for a new event with a competitive element, organised outside the BFI's orbit. Fill in your questionnaires carefully.



Soon at a screen near you, Cal MacAninch and the superlative Emily Woolf in the Thomas Hardy adaptation *The Woodlanders*

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF "LEAVING LAS VEGAS"



WESLEY SNIPES • NASTASSJA KINSKI • KYLE MACLACHLAN
MING-NA WEN and ROBERT DOWNEY JR.
One Night Stand
A MIKE FIGGIS FILM
AT CINEMAS NATIONWIDE TOMORROW

NEW ON VIDEO: Insects and violence; Woody Allen on song; having a laugh with the junkies

In webs of intrigue

MICROCOSMOS
Fox Guild, U, 1996
BIOLOGISTS turned filmmakers Claude Nurisany and Marie Perennou take their cameras right up close to the insect world, where dung beetles, dragonflies, snails, moths, caterpillars, bees and the bizarre argyronet spider do what comes naturally in a meadow in the south of France. There is no narration, the anthropomorphic excesses of Disney's live-action documentaries are avoided, and you cannot beat the commercial ingredients (sex, violence). If the cast were human, the film might even be banned. A rental release.

EVERYONE SAYS I LOVE YOU
Buena Vista, 12, 1996
THEY say it in song, too, in Woody Allen's mostly beguiling, toe-tapping comedy romance about the modern

neuroses of upscale New Yorkers, set to the sounds of a Thirties Hollywood musical. But instead of Fred and Ginger, we get Drew Barrymore and Edward Norton, whose romance is imperilled by family quirks and the arrival of a paroled prisoner. Allen's cast also includes Julia Roberts, Goldie Hawn and himself: not everyone can sing well, or manage fancy footwork, but they deserve a for effort. Available to rent.

PRIVATE PARTS
Entertainment, 18, 1996
HOWARD Stern, America's outspoken talk-show host, plays himself in this slim but engaging comedy chronicling his progress from awkward disc jockey in Hartford, Con-

necticut, to top radio anarchist in New York. Stern crashes through the taste barrier: he talks endlessly about sexual exploits, and offers cheerful insults across the social spectrum. On film, at least, his lust for work and play is endearing, and it's always bracing to watch the battle between a maverick and the Establishment. A rental release.

GRIDLOCK'D
PolyGram, 13, 1996
AT FIRST sight, this seems your ordinary tale of urban hell, of splattered heads and souls snuffed out. Then the penny drops. It's a comedy, about two druggies struggling to fulfil a hasty new year's resolution to kick the heroin habit. As director, actor

Vondie Curtis Hall clearly suffers from first-film nerves. But he knows how to control his cast. You sense a real rapport between Tim Roth and the late Tupac Shakur as they wait and curse in dingy offices, or inflict stab wounds in order to land in hospital. Against the odds, this movie is sharp, funny and likeable. Available to rent.

SCREAM
Buena Vista, 18, 1996
HORROR maestro Wes Craven directs this terrifically bouncy and self-mocking tale about the youth of a suburban town terrorised by a serial killer obsessed with movie trivia. Aside from the in-jokes, Craven ensures we scream alongside his characters at the

indestructible killer in the Halloween mask who taunts down the phone, baunts the patio, and penetrates every door and window. Neve Campbell heads the list of potential victims in the best horror movie in ages. Available to rent.

LYDIA
Carlton, U, 1941
DETERMINED to make a showcase for his wife Merle Oberon, producer Alexander Korda surrounded her with fancy words, a fancy wardrobe, sumptuous sets and a line-up of adoring men recalling their wooing days in the late 1920s. But this partial reworking of the French hit *Un carnet de bal* never moves beyond its visual delights. Joseph Cotten heads the male corps, and Edna May Oliver steals every available scene.

GEOFF BROWN

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ACROSS THE COUNTRY

THE TIMES THURSDAY NOVEMBER 27 1997

NEW MOVIES: Geoff Brown sees *Alien Resurrection's* musings on parental roles degenerate into the usual gore-fest

Mother, what sharp teeth you have

At the end of *Alien*, Sigourney Weaver's Ripley torched herself to death after being impregnated with alien seed. She was being the tragic heroine, saving the world through losing her own life. Now we know it was wasted effort. For 200 years further into the future, Ripley is back, inventively cloned from a blood sample. The aliens are back too, dripping goo, extending tentacles, munching on human heads.

Is *Alien Resurrection*, then, simply a case of business as usual? Not quite. Ripley herself is not as she was. Her wiry strength, always impressive, is now super-human. A knife thrust into her hand causes no scath, no pain. When a drop of her blood reaches the floor it sizzles like an egg frying in the pan. The alien gene is within her.

The director, too, is an alien of sorts. He is Jean-Pierre Jeunet, one half of the team responsible for *Delicatessen* and, less successfully, *The City of Lost Children*. He is French. He is bizarre. He has \$70 million to play with. He sprinkles the film with eccentric humour and sleek, space-ship imagery with industrial-cum-Gothic designs. He brings on board Dominique Pinon, rubber-faced clown of his previous films, along with his cameraman, Darius Khoo.

First impressions are good. Jojo Whedon's jaunty script helps to banish the gloom and monotony that proliferated through *Alien*. Dina Haddad commands the spaceship Auriga, a military research base, and views the reactivated Weaver with caution. "She looks at me funny one time," he snaps, "and I'm putting her down." Other observers of Ripley Mark 2 include the pirate crew of *The Betty*, which docks with a cargo of frozen human beings destined to serve as alien hosts. There is Ron Perlman, his face scarred, every word a grunt. There is Pinon, a paraplegic. And one woman: Winona Ryder, hair short, appeal somewhat diminished, as the crew's mechanic with a hidden agenda. As the minutes advance, though, the *Alien* the happy-go-lucky genre machine takes over from Jeunet. Personal touches get lost in the action as the aliens rampage, slimy pits fester, cocoons pulsate and humans flee. They have plenty of firepower with which to blast opponents. But Weaver is their main weapon: she is the star, the co-producer and the series' linchpin, and should not be approached in a dark alley.

One has to admire her as she sees off all foes with such curt authority. But liked? Taken to heart? No. Much of the film's material plays with the notion of motherhood and the gulf between human and alien urges, but the film itself stifles anything approaching a tender feeling. Scenes between Weaver and Ryder particularly suffer. We should feel a connection between the two; we do not. We should also feel a sense of wonder as the human species goes to the brink. Instead we experience the usual gore in a brilliant but cold-hearted spectacle. It is frustrating, for somewhere within the big-budget compro-

Alien Resurrection
Odeon West End
18, 108 mins
Sigourney Weaver
lives again

The Tango Lesson
Renoir, U, 101 mins
Foot-tapping metaphors
with Sally Potter

Under the Skin
Mango, 18, 85 mins
Grief explored in a
powerful British movie

One Night Stand
Warner West End
18, 102 mins
Absorbing tale of
infidelity from
Mike Figgis

Keep the Aspidochelone Flying
Cannon Mayfair
12, 101 mins
Orwell bites the dust

8 Heads in a Duffel Bag
Warner West End
15, 95 mins
Frankie black comedy

misses of *Alien Resurrection* a far better, quirkier, movie is struggling to break free.

Even Weaver's bravery wiles beside Sally Potter's in *The Tango Lesson*. Consider: having broken through to international audiences five years ago with *Orlando*, the director refuses to play the mainstream game, crafting something small, idiosyncratic and extremely personal, shot mostly in black-and-white. She puts herself up on the screen, too, as a film director called Sally, who starts taking lessons in Paris from tango luminary Pablo Veron to ease pressures endured making a project called *Rage*. The two fall in love and make a pact: she will become his dancing partner, and he will star in her new film, which now is not *Rage* but, you guessed it, *The Tango Lesson*.

Thus reduced, Potter's film might sound intriguingly self-indulgent, but it does not play that way. By exposing her vulnerabilities on screen, Potter allows us to feel our way



The Tango Lesson: Sally Potter and Pablo Veron

inside her fanciful autobiography. As a dancer, she proves more than competent: indeed, she worked as a performance artist before being seduced by cinema. There is no professional polish to her acting, though: her awkwardness is natural and touching. Veron, no actor either, also puts himself on the line. As teacher and pupil working, switching and gliding, pushing and pulling, multiple overtones build up. For Potter, the tango becomes a means of exploring the dynamics of power, and of all love relationships and creative endeavours. Who should follow and who should lead? Both Veron and Potter, in their separate fields of tango and cinema, are used to having the upper hand: crossing over to each other's arena, they must make difficult adjustments.

The metaphor, though, is never belaboured: we soak up the meanings with each ravishing, impassioned dance, variously performed in the streets, studios, a Paris kitchen, and a rainy street. You emerge from the cinema moved and exhilarated, with an un-English urge to dance away the night, a rose between the teeth. Under the Skin is also something special: a new British film that confidently embraces raw, painful feelings, and gives ordinary lives the kind of visual texture usually found in European art movies. The director who worked

this miracle is Carine Adler, whose first feature this is. Her subject is grief, and the part a mother's sudden death plays in the downward spiral of Iris, the less loved of two daughters. Samantha Morton, all of 20, throws herself wholeheartedly into the complex part; as she flirts with promiscuity, we watch with a mix of compassion, incomprehension and horror.

Faced with shooting in dingy bedsits and Liverpool streets, Barry Ackroyd, also Ken Loach's cameraman, never settles for lazy realism, but creates a heightened mood that suggests Kieslowski's modern moralities such as *The Ten Commandments*. Slow motion is used expressively, as is rock music, principally by the Aloof. Not every feature funded by the British Film Institute and Channel 4 tackles genuine problems with emotional maturity and artistic flair, but this one does, and it has a string of festival rewards to prove it.

Wesley Snipes won his own festival award, at Venice, for his role in *One Night Stand*, although every part in Mike Figgis's film is pitched and played close to perfection. Snipes plays a commercials director from LA who gets his one night stand in New York with the equally married Nastassja Kinski. We jump one year forward, when

Snipes's marriage and work hit trouble. The action then swings back to New York, where Snipes's best friend, dying of AIDS (Robert Downey Jr), helps the parties to explore their true feelings.

There are artificial elements in the script, which was first concocted by the brash Joe Eszterhas. But Figgis, as director, writer and composer, treats the subject with such refinement that the characters come close to seeming genuine

human beings. He is particularly good at tracing relationships through looks and gestures, transforming what could easily have been leering, slam-bang cinema. As a successor to *Leaving Las Vegas* the film lacks weight, but it is stylish, thoughtful and witty, and should ring bells with many audiences.

Keep the Aspidochelone Flying, on the other hand, would be hard pressed to summon the faintest tinkle. The period

movie machine keeps the images coming smoothly, but there is something so small and archaic about Robert Bierman's treatment of George Orwell's novel that the images disappear almost as you watch.

Richard E. Grant plays Orwell's alter ego, an advertising copywriter and aspiring poet in the 1930s, struggling to embrace poverty and his art. Helena Bonham Carter, almost inevitably, is his patient

girlfriend. The result, bar the odd moment of muted humour, is the most pointless British film of the year.

And was *8 Heads in a Duffel Bag* really necessary? The title is fun and the plot shows promise (severed heads en route to a mobster get mixed up with a medical student's holiday luggage). But with Joe Eszterhas directing, it is nowhere near as funny as it should be.



So you thought Sigourney Weaver cashed in her chips at the end of *Alien*? Well, thanks to advanced medical technology you, Winona Ryder — and the baddies — can think again

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SNAP VERDICT

Every week, young film fans discuss the latest releases...

ALIEN RESURRECTION
Leslie: Isaiah Thomas, 19: The intelligence of the script and direction make this a highly disturbing movie.
Dom: Young, 19: A dark and brooding return to form.
Jethro: Askin, 18: I was petrified. Easily one of the best *Alien* movies.
Sharada: Osman, 19: Sigourney Weaver is magnificent. She eats up the screen.

ONE NIGHT STAND
Leslie: A simple romantic comedy is dressed up as art, and fails on both counts.
Dom: A real dud.
Jethro: The abundance of coincidences make a mockery of the storyline.
Sharada: Julian Sands appears for five minutes; how the great have fallen.

THE TANGO LESSON
Leslie: Occasional striking images.
Dom: All right, a bit arty.
Jethro: An over-long home movie.
Sharada: Pablo Veron can teach me the tango any day.

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MEGASTORES

LONDON

ALL IN THE WRONG Paul Shelley receives the role of Sir John Redgrave in Arthur Murphy's excellent 18th-century romp. One of this theatre's happiest rediscoveries returns again for the Christmas season. Orange Tree, Clarence Street, Richmond (0181-840 3633). Preview from tonight, 7.45pm. Opens Mon, 7.45pm. Then Mon-Sat, 7.45pm; mat, 2.30pm. Sun, 2.30pm. Additional mat Dec 19, 31, Jan 2, 4pm.

CYRANO DE BERGERAC The sell-out RSC production from Stratford, with Antony Sher as Roxanne's tragic romantic hero, in London for a limited season. Gregory Doran directs. Lyric Theatre, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (0171-494 2344). Opens tonight, 7.30pm. Then Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mat, Wed, Sat, 2pm.

ON LES BEAUX JOURS Ninette Parry plays Becket's Wife, eventually overshadowed up to her neck in the earth, here for the French Theatre Season. Performed in French. Riverside Studios, Crisp Road, W6 (0181-741 2255). Tonight-Sat, Dec 2-6, 8pm.

SCHIMMERER'S ALMANAC Rooms only for this special where the academy award-winning Hilary Swank teams up with one of the foremost theatre interpreters of our time, baritone Orla Bly. Ensemble theatre, 100, Tottenham Court Road, W1 (0171-494 2344). Tonight, 7.30pm.

ELSEWHERE Tonight's concert by the London Mozart Players offers an opportunity to hear Beethoven's Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No 8.

ANGELS AND DEMONS The excellent British Talens perform the role of Adam and his first wife, Eve, in the angelic tale of the demoniac. Theatrical Theatre, Victoria Road, W1 (0171-339 1000). Sun-Thurs and Sat, 8pm; mat, Wed, Sat, 2pm and Sun, 4pm. Until Nov 30.

THE BOYS IN THE BAND Mart Crowley's ground-breaking play from 1968 now something of a period piece with its gay means witty but wretched message. Transfer from the King's Head, Islington. Aldwych, WC2 (0171-416 0032). Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat, Thurs and Sat, 2pm.

THE CHAIRS Richard Briers and Geraldine McEwan play the ancient couple waiting for their important guests in Kenneth's celebrated 'Raggle Taggle Giggie'. Simon MacCormack directs for Complicité, design by the Quay Brothers. Royal Court Theatre (Duke of York's), St Martin's Lane, WC2 (0171-363 5000). Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat, Sat, from Nov 28, 3.30pm.

CHICAGO Revised version of the celebrated Kander & Ebb musical directed by Walter Bobbie. A multi-Tony award-winning Broadway hit, starring Rumsay Hargrave, Lin Lacey, Henry Goodman and Nigel Plener. Adelphi, Strand, London WC2 (0171-344 0000). Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat, Wed, Sat, 2.30pm.

CLOSER In Patrick Marber's new play, directed by himself, Sally Dwyer and Lisa Waller, Susan Hinde and Owen Gwynne play strangers who fall.

NEW RELEASES **EXCESS BAGGAGE** (12). After Silverstone takes her own kidnapping to secure her father's love. Emily-headed and exasperating comedy. (Warner). Virgin (0181-770 6015).

INVENTING THE ABYSS (15). Coming of age in late 1950s. Overly solemn and old-fashioned drama. (Falcon). Virgin (0181-770 6015).

LAWN DODGERS (15). Two outsiders form a dangerous friendship in Kentucky. Inevitable drama, with strong performances by Michael Biehn and Sam Rockwell. Director, John Dugan. ABC (0181-770 6015).

NOTHING TO LOSE (15). Tim Robbins wastes his time and ours in a comedy about an advertising executive on the road with a mugger. With Martin Lawrence, Director, Steve Cade. (Columbia). Virgin (0181-770 6015).

REGENERATION (15). Powerful and poignant version of Pat Barker's novel about first world war soldiers in an Edinburgh military hospital. With Jonathan Pryce and James Wilby. Director, Giles MacKinnon. (Columbia). Virgin (0181-770 6015).

SEVEN YEARS IN TIBET (PG). Brad Pitt finds enlightenment in 1940s.

TODAY'S CHOICE

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Martin Hargrave

coupled with two works by the composer's contemporary, Johann Nepomuk Hummel, the Gesellschaftschor and the rarely heard Piano Concerto in A flat. Howard Shelley directs from the piano. Amici, Church Lane (01258 844544). Tonight, 7.45pm.

BELFAST Music by the late experimental composer John Cage accompanies Merce Cunningham's recent choreographed opera, *Obsession*. In the round by 15 dancers accompanied by 112 musicians, the

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work creates the idea of an aerial impression of a journey downwards towards the ocean's floor. A UK and Ireland premiere. (01222 65577). Tonight-Sat, 7.45pm.

HUDDESFIELD As part of the contemporary music festival here the violinist Suzanne Sherriff plants Julian Jacobson's folk for the afternoon for a celebratory which includes the British premiere of Lou Harrison's *Grand Duo*. This is preceded by John Adams's *Road Movie* and Jonathan Harvey's *Flight*. (01484-430338). Today, 1pm.

GLASGOW: THE BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under its new chief conductor Carmo Winkler gives the first Scottish performance of James MacMillan's *Symphony* which was well received at its premiere in London earlier in the year. Also on the programme are Edward MacNally's *The Spirit of Wallace* and Britten's *Piano Concerto*. (0141-287 6511). Tonight, 7.30pm.

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Sergei Prokofiev, who died in 1953 when Lazarev was eight: his opera *The Gambler* formed Lazarev's Bolshoi debut

Russian pride and Russian prejudice

John Allison on why the conductor Alexander Lazarev is looking forward to working this weekend

The conductor Alexander Lazarev calls Prokofiev "a diamond of 20th-century music". While few would disagree, Lazarev speaks with special authority when it comes to a composer he will be conducting in two concerts this weekend, as part of the London Philharmonic Orchestra's

entire Prokofiev Festival. Prokofiev has been central to his life, even though Lazarev has no personal memories of him: the future conductor was only eight when the great composer died in 1953. But it was with Prokofiev's notoriously difficult first opera, *The Gambler*, that Lazarev made his Bolshoi debut in 1974, an event that launched his big-time career. He went on to become music director of the Bolshoi, making him perhaps the Soviet Union's most powerful conductor, but he still considers that early production one of his biggest achievements.

The Gambler was being performed not only for the first time at the Bolshoi, but for the first time in Russia, and it was the reason I took the job. I didn't want to conduct one of their old stagings, and this turned out to be the most interesting production of that period there.

These associations do not prevent Lazarev from taking a wide view of the composer. It helps that he conducts much more non-Russian music than many of his Russian colleagues. In his first season as

principal conductor of the Scottish National Orchestra he is featuring Italian works, Mahler, and Wagner, but brings Russian insights to the job. "The SNO is not just another British orchestra — it's a special orchestra," he says. "It has a special pride in representing Scotland. I can feel the difference."

Lazarev divides music into two categories: "That which I like to listen to, and that which I like to listen to. Music I like to listen to I invite someone else to conduct." Prokofiev is very firmly in his first category, at the top of the list. But he does not make any distinction between the two apparently

different sides of the composer's output, those pieces written by the *enfant terrible* of the 1920s and the later works, which most count as some of the most genuinely popular music of our century. "For me, Prokofiev provides a connection with the music of the last century," he says. "The government has the money, but not the political experience or interest. They don't appreciate what music, sport and all the arts can do for the image of the country."

He was one of Rimsky-Korsakov's wonderful pupils who carried those ideas forward. The early music is brutal and often hard to balance because Prokofiev was still inexperienced, then, as he became more focused his art became simpler.

The conductor admits that as he has matured and gained a non-Soviet perspective on the composer, he has understood him better. He offers a fresh view of a figure many commentators have labelled as naive for his apparent lack of political foresight. "For me it was difficult to see why, after

having left Russia in 1918, Prokofiev returned for good at such a dangerous time as 1936. He was not an idealist, and he knew he was risking his life."

But in my opinion he wanted to be first in something. He had left Russia a little too late and was overshadowed in the West as a pianist by Rachmaninov. He composed the *Syphian Suite*, but Stravinsky had already covered that ground in *The Rite of Spring*. By going back he wanted to set a new standard in Russia, but Shostakovich had already composed works like his Fourth Symphony. He was dogged by bad luck — even his death was eclipsed by Stalin's demise on the very same day.

That's why Lazarev, now in his early fifties, remembers vividly. He remembers well too how the Soviet top brass patronised the Bolshoi, and speaks of their incompetence in the same subconsciously hushed tones as he does of the current situation, about which he is darkly pessimistic. Although he remains Moscow-based, he quit the increasingly underfunded Bolshoi in 1995 rather than preside over its decline.

He is one of the few who have seen most of my life in the national opera theatre that represented Russia. The SNO players are very dedicated, but also friendly. I enjoy a good relationship with them, while often the love between conductor and orchestra is a bit like sunshine in London.

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Making plans for no Nigel

THIS was the first time I had heard Kennedy play live since the 'Disowning of the Christian Name'. So what did it all signify? I sought in vain for musical clues, cryptic and otherwise. But in both Bach (Johann Sebastian) and Beethoven (Ludwig), both Nigel and Kennedy were reassuringly and vibrantly present. And even Nigel came along.

The evening kicked off with a hefty swipe at the air from those great green leather shoes, and a stinging upbeat into Bach's Violin Concerto in A minor. Every new run of semiquavers, every new sequence and figure had Kenne-

dy running circles — virtually literally — around the sections of a hunched but eager English Chamber Orchestra.

Kennedy, conducted from the bow, Nige leapt out as if land on the leader's own toes in a leprechaun-like finale. And Nigel Kennedy himself, at last lost in a world of sound far removed from self and from image-of-self, sang his heart out in the slow movement. A big thumbs-up to the wings, and he welcomed on stage Katharine Gowers, a young violinist of distinctive imagination and character.

She led the way in Bach's Concerto in D minor for Two Violins, and within the first seconds sparks were flying. Hers is a more careful, more poised performing style than Kennedy's. But both are airy, passionate spirits, and the daring and daring of their intuitive playing, and the little surprises they set up for each other in the finale, made this performance compelling.

The ECO, which could do little more than try to keep up, seemed somewhat relieved when its new associate conductor, Shuntaro Sato, walked on to conduct Beethoven's Violin Concerto. But before long he all but became the Invisible Man as Kennedy conducted fearfully from the bow. When he turned his back to the podium and to us, facing the 4500's small ensemble, what we witnessed was private chamber-music making of the highest order.

Again the slow movement focused Kennedy and stilled his spirit. He seemed at times a little too entranced by his own playing; but this concentration led to a wonderfully mellow voice for the opening of the Rondo finale. Kennedy, now in Mephistophelean guise, took the pulsing pizzicato to cello pedal as the cue for a long, extended cadenza, teasing the line with microtones, letting it lie low, only to whip it into diabolic trills and triple stopping — until a last, sweet duet and a final triumphant kick of the green leather heels.

HILARY FINCH

ART GALLERIES

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THE TIMES THURSDAY NOVEMBER 27 1997

Illyria put off balance

Shakespeare's editors usually place the first scene of *Twelfth Night* in "Duke Orsino's palace" and the second at "the seacoast". But that hardly seems sufficient to encapsulate what Adrian Noble and his designer, Anthony Ward, proceed to lob at us in the RSC's latest revival of the play.

First, Scott Handy's languishing Orsino and his velvet-suited courtiers dreamily listening to soporific tunes on an antique phonograph. Then on rushes what looks like the cast of *Casualty*. They push round a hospital bed containing Helen Schlesinger's half-drowned Viola and don't forget to direct dirty looks at the sea-captain, who stands smoking a smelly old pipe.

You prepare for a jokey *Twelfth Night* with the odd, evocative note echoing beneath the fun; and that, on the whole, is what you get. Some excellent actors, from Stephen Boxer as a sharp, subversive Feste, to John Quayle as a cheerfully dim Aguecheek in a Garrick Club bow tie, give some lovely performances. A few of them try to inject depth into the proceedings. But if you are looking for a truly rich, resonant production of the play, I would recommend waiting until this one has matured and mellowed a bit.

Noble's *Illyria* is a touchily place, with surprising intensities shimmering beneath the comic surface. Schlesinger's gangling, frizzy-haired Viola delivers the lines about Orsino's beauty and building a cabin at her gaze with a seriousness the sweeter for being so artlessly honest. There are turbulent yearnings beneath Clare Holman's Olivia and her funeral weeds. David Calder's Belch struts about in an awful green suit sporting a Biggles-era moustache, yet suggests some of the vulnerability and melancholy of the ageing, fading wastrel.

But the performance of the evening comes from Philip Voss as Malvolio. Like Boxer,

who has also made a speciality of playing slyly dulcet and sinister cardinals for the RSC, this fine actor is cast against expectation and rewards us with a splendid portrait of embattled gravitas. Strolling grimly down his nightshirt, bairnet and chain of office to confront the revellers in Olivia's kitchen, he might be Gladstone or Palmerston inadvertently tooled out as a pantomime dame. Trundling through Olivia's garden with her forged love letter, or making his stately progress towards her in a lunatic yellow blazer, he cuts an equally incongruous figure.

He also does much to explain why the role has attracted so many major actors. There is a sensuality behind his monolithic grandeur, a defencelessness that exposes itself in sudden sobe of joy when he decides that his desirable employer desires him. And he is memorably forlorn when he is trapped, not in the usual prison, but by chain and collar to the inside of a kennel through whose roof he is fed dog-meat and urine. Yet the picture of pomposity floored might, I think, have more impact in another production.

Far be it from me to complain of the spirited invention that gives us sailor suits and chauffeur's costumes, a 10ft fridge packed with booze for Belch, a locker-room scene with naked male bodies for Viola to wince from, and a hilariously bawdy rendering of double entendres I had never previously perceived in the rondo "Hold thy peace". But they do create a mood that's unfriendly to the avoirdupois Voss brings to Malvolio. It's as if a heavyweight has enlisted in a contest custom-made for lightweight.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE



Clare Holman as Olivia and Philip Voss as Malvolio: turbulent yearnings and a splendid portrait of embattled gravitas

Lack of animation

A Grand Night Out Peacock

THE Peacock did not so much resemble a theatre as a zoo on opening night. A pen full of sheep in the foyer, a paparazzi photocall with a live penguin, and actors on stage pretending to be those Plasticine legends Wallace & Gromit. In simple terms of cruelty to animals, it was the last who came off worst.

By turning Nick Park's brilliant animations into human beings, Andrew Dawson, the creator of the stage show, loses half the magic at a single stroke. What is left are dog-eared bits of the Oscar-winning children's stories that star the slippered inventor, Wallace, and his long-suffering canine companion, Gromit.

Paul Filipiak captures Wallace's vocal ties and absent-mindedness quite brilliantly, and Gromit's eyebrows squirm resentfully whenever Wallace looks at Joyce Henderson's Wendolene. But however good the actors are at impersonating Plasticine, they can never reproduce the marvellous ironic artistry of the animations.

Dawson's major improvisation: a pan-theatrical caravan beautifully designed by Tom Piper that opens up to reveal a fully automated travelling theatre. The clever bit is that with the help of a spinning costume chair and a remote control, the actors (Wallace, Gromit, Shaun the sheep and Wallace's heart-throb, Wendolene)

can take on ready-made bits of opera, drama, horror or ballet. The joy of this invention, of course, is that it loses control. At one point Russ Edwards's Gromit finds himself in a Hammer House horror wearing a tutu and belting out opera.

The villain of the piece is Feathers Macgraw, a fiendish Penguin who wants to murder Wallace and Gromit. Unfortunately you have to know something of the original films to understand why. Why also does Angela Clark's Penguin go about with a four-fingered rubber glove on her head, and what is the significance of an enormous pair of robotic trousers with a mind of their own?

Too much time is spent looking for the inconsequential Beast of Wensleydale Moor. Too little when Feathers gets hold of the remote control and turns it into the *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. "We're being skewered like lamb kebabs," shrieks Wendolene as the spinning blades of steel saws descend from the lighting rig. No such luck. This rare moment apart, the show flows with all the urgency of animated theatre.

JAMES CHRISTOPHER

James's peach

The Heiress Gate, Dublin

ANY doctor should know something is wrong when he can't hear his own heart — even with a stethoscope. Near the climax of the Gate's careful but emotionally charged production of *The Heiress*, Dr Sloper (Des Cave) performs just such a self-examination, and though he may have scouted his only daughter's chance of happiness, he hears nothing but signs of a congestion that will not lift.

The Henry James revival, which has so far been largely cinematic, hits Dublin with a careful but profoundly moving production of Ruth and Augustus Goetz's rather stiff-necked 1940s stage version of the novella's *Washington Square*, in which love and money mix with quiet but destructive consequences.

James's tale of the doomed relationship between Catherine (Dorina Dent), a woman whose most fetching quality is deemed to be her dowry, and Morris (Stephen Hogan), a personable wastrel with no scruples about how he will attain the good life, is formidably subtle. Despite the fairytale flavour of the story — the untrustworthy suitor is the Big Bad Wolf in town wear — his moral remains jauntily uncertain.

Michael Rudman's production, featuring a set crammed with cornices and pilasters, is almost aggressively naturalistic. But when the emotions on

stage are so off-centre, so painfully somnambulant, there is no call for a set of jagged abstraction.

Cave's pugnacious Dr Sloper is almost charming but overpoweringly self-righteous, and Hogan's Morris keeps handsomely dumb as to whether he is aware what a monster he is. Susan Fitzgerald's Lavinian has a touch of pantomime dame in her squeaky prying.

Almost everything, however, depends on Catherine, who is many things at once. She is never really as glib as she acts, and always a little cleverer than she is able to reveal. As such, Catherine is the key to rendering the novel on stage. In this crucial role, Rudman draws an impressive, restrained and subtle performance from Dent.

As Catherine is always looking around for words that will not come, Dent is forced to work as much through sharp, spare body language, as through anything she says. The vocabulary Dent conjures for this task is magnificent. So effective, indeed, that she remains as expressive with her back turned to the audience.

LUKE CLANCY

NEW CLASSICAL CDS: Blistering Walton on a budget; great voices of Sadler's Wells; dark and pungent Schubert

Barry Millington

WALTON *Symphony No 1 Partia English, Northern Philharmonia/Daniel Naxos 8.553180 *** £4.99* WALTON'S First is his symphonic masterpiece and it should have been the one to launch Naxos's Walton series in the spring of 1996. But an unavoidable delay in production meant that the more emotionally detached Second Symphony appeared first. It was an excellent issue, but it is surpassed by this cracking performance of the First, in which the English Northern Philharmonia play their socks off for Paul Daniel.

The rhythmic energy is at

most overwhelming and the Scherzo, with its jagged string figures and spitting woodwind, positively oozes malice. Sadly, the recorded sound does the orchestra no favours: its rawness certainly emphasises the aggressive attack of the strings, but it lacks depth and presence. Still, this blistering version, coupled with the virtuosic Partita and at a budget price, is well worth investigating.

John Higgins

VARIOUS *Stars of English Opera Vol 3 Dutton CDLX 7024 *** £9.99* THOSE who remember the Sadler's Wells Opera in its

days after the war are likely to seize on this latest piece of excellent remastering. One of the company's revelations was Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra*, previously unknown in this country. Here are three extracts from the Wells cast under the invigorating baton of Michael Mudie. Howell Glynn shows his very substantial bass in Fiesco's aria from the Prologue. Arnold Matters in the title role begins by sounding lightweight but then works up plenty of fervour in the Council Chamber scene. James Johnston, the house's favourite tenor, shines in the Act II trio.

Gerald Davies gives a very stylish account of Rodolfo's *Bohème* aria in a previously unpublished recording. And there are two chances to hear Tano Ferencinos, a tenor who

helped the Welsh National Opera to get off the ground. The tone can be sharp and bleary, but it certainly has a keen cutting edge.

Among the more familiar names there are two Heddle Nash tracks, and the first recording Ferrier made of *Chéjaro* (1944).

Hilary Finch

SCHUBERT *Schubert Edition Vol 29 Lipovsek/Johnson Hyperion CDJ 33029 *** £19.49* MARJANA LIPOVSEK'S mezzo-soprano is one of the more pungent aromas to rise from the ever-simmering Hyperion Schubert Edition. The warm, dark bloom in her voice immediately distinguishes her performance of *Abendbilder*, creating low-lying mists over the evening landscape, as Graham Johnson's piano playing touches in the tolling

of a bell, the light of the first stars.

This volume focuses on the songs of 1819 and 1820, when Schubert was frequenting literary and reading circles, discovering and rediscovering the poetry of Mayrhofer, Schiller — and of Schlegel, whose *Waldenacht* rings with the forest-horror of the German psyche in Lipovsek's exciting interpretation.

A frequent bonus in this Schubert Edition is the guest appearance of a rising young

singer. Here the baritone Nathan Berg rises to the challenge of the 19-minute *Einsamkeit (Solitude)* in his central performance of a work which has been called the first of the songcycles.

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Roger Scruton is rocked and rolled by the revolution that has placed pop at the top of the political charts

Just add a pinch of Spice

POLITICS AND POPULAR CULTURE

By John Street
Polity Press, £39.50
ISBN 0 7456 1213 X

Television, pop music and mass-market films have greatly affected the course of recent politics. The ordinary voter depends for information on television and the tabloid press, and for inspiration on Oasis and the Spice Girls. And the first requirement for political success is a face that looks plausible on the screen, and a message that can be transmitted in sound-bites. Nobody thinks this to be an improvement over the days when politicians were rarely seen and heard only in the course of complicated speeches on the radio. But it is the way things are and we must make the best of it.

Human beings have a natural respect for power and a natural desire to believe that power is legitimate. In the days when high culture exerted power, therefore, it was also respected. It enhanced the authority of de Gaulle that his

first act on liberating Paris should be to arrange a state funeral for Valéry. It was a plus for Macmillan that he sat in the House of Commons reading Thucydides, and conducting orchestras made even Harold Heath seem human. Harold Wilson tried to honour the Beatles, but, this gesture apart, no politician until recent times has thought it necessary to show any interest in the world of popular entertainment. For it was thought to be a world of ephemera: powerless, transitory and incapable of influencing the course of history.

The mass media have changed all that. Pop "culture", as John Street calls it, is now a major political force. The last election saw the party leaders scrambling to prove

their credentials as admirers of the Spice Girls, and the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales sticks in the mind (and the gut) largely because Elton John stole the show. Stealing the show is indeed as much the goal of modern politics as the aim of every pop star, and the fact that Tony Blair is so good at it explains the phenomenal success of his party.

During the 1960s there arose an academic subject called "cultural studies", ostensibly devoted to the study of popular culture but in fact built around a sub-Marxist agenda. Its aim was to recruit the world of pop and television to the cause of organised dissent. Street has clearly been greatly influenced by cultural studies, and

believes that popular culture has been a "source of political resistance" throughout its history. In his view, governments try desperately to control this liberating force, by censorship and propaganda, but are never able to negate its subversive effect on the "bourgeois" order. This is the opposite of the old Marxist view, typified by Adorno, which saw popular entertainment (and popular music especially) as part of "bourgeois ideology," designed precisely to secure the acquiescence of the masses in the system that exploited them.

So there: take a couple of conflicting Marxist views, and you can turn anything, even pop culture, into an academic subject. People who would otherwise stay at home playing with the video and the CD player can now go to university and play with them there.

A vast, jargon-infested literature has grown out of this obsession, and Street takes us on a tour of it, coming to few conclusions and never defining his subject except through examples. If we mean the word "culture", in the sense made familiar by the anthropologists, then popular culture does not consist merely in songs and soaps. Religion, manners and habits of dress

are at least as important — and were originally far more important.

Moreover, these are not normally "sources of political resistance", but, on the contrary, ways of living with the fact of political power. If, on the other hand, you mean "culture" in the sense that critics use the term, I doubt that pop songs and television soaps are a form of culture at all. For they are set outside the range of critical judgment and produced solely to satisfy popular taste, and never to educate it.

Clearly needed much study to persuade Street that pop is a subversive force, and that the "official culture" is constantly trying to silence it. For every public space in our country is filled by pop, no-

body is prepared to listen to a word against it, our politicians of all persuasions seek endorsement from those who produce and market it, and the few people who know it for the moral and spiritual disaster that it is are an endangered species, though one which will never be protected by the conservationists.

But then, Street has read much, but very selectively. Nowhere do the arguments of Humboldt, Coleridge, Arnold, Leavis, Eliot, or the other defenders of high culture get a look in: never does he set up for himself a serious dissenting voice — a voice that will dissent from dissent. His book illustrates a sad truth: that the voice of high culture has disappeared from the modern academy, and what remains is merely the pathology of social diseases, produced largely by those infected with them.

Bard of the British ballad

POETRY

Charles Causley once said that he became a poet the day he joined the destroyer *Edgely* at Scapa Flow in 1940. He was 23 years old, and up to then had worked as a clerk in a builder's office in his native Cornwall. Six years serving on the lower decks in the Royal Navy brought him face to face with death, as well as teaching him the common touch, with results that can be seen in his first book of verse, *Farwell*, Aggie Weston, not published until 1951.

Causley was a slow developer, but already in that first book there was one poem which showed him at full strength, the excellent *A Ballad for Katharine of Aragon*, which links the death of the young queen with the death in battle of his gunner friend Jumper Cross: "O shall I leap in the river? And knock upon paradise door? For a gunner of twenty seven and a half! And a queen of twenty four! From the almond tree by the river! I watch the sky with a groan! For Jumper and Kate are always out late! And I lie here alone."

This owes something to Auden, but more to the tradition of anonymous English ballads of the kind which Sir Philip Sidney spoke of as stirring his blood like the sound of a trumpet. Such

Robert Nye

COLLECTED POEMS 1951-1997

By Charles Causley

Macmillan, £20

ISBN 0 333 69921 1

SELECTED POEMS FOR CHILDREN

By Charles Causley

Macmillan, £5.99

ISBN 0 333 55404 3

things have to be fresh and direct, and touch the heart. This suits Causley, and he has few modern rivals in the field. Ballad-mongering is not the whole of this man's achievement, though. His publishers have done him proud with a *Collected Poems 1951-1997* which demonstrates the whole range of his work — from narrative poems rooted in myth and legend to sharp little poems of self-accusation such as *Thusham*. The common denominator is honesty. You can feel it in the rhythms.

Causley returned from war service to become a schoolteacher, and some of the finest of his later poems reflect his concern for his pupils. Here he is worrying away about a boy from the back streets: "Timothy Winters has bloody feet/ and he lives in a house on Suez Street/ He sleeps in a sack on the kitchen floor/ And they say there aren't boys like him any more." The last line has an awkwardness which expresses the power of the poet's feelings by rubbing right up against the limits of the form.

It seems of the essence of Causley that several of the poems in the *Collected* appear also in his *Selected Poems for Children*, but that in the adult volume they are not presented separately under any special heading of "children's poetry". There is a telling phrase at the start of that *Katharine of Aragon* ballad, where poetic perception is identified as seeing things "with the eyes of a child of ten". It is a child's mixture of innocence and knowledge which this poet aspires to. In short, Causley is the real thing, and I'd bet that some of his lines will be remembered and loved when the work of more ambitious 20th-century poets has been long forgotten.

THE TIMES ON SATURDAY

Sex drugs and fat advances! **Trainspotting** launched a new literary handwagon. Plus: **Sheryl Crow** — lonelier than ever

metro

NEW AUTHORS PUBLISH YOUR WORK ALL SUBJECTS CONSIDERED. **MINERVA PRESS** 200 BROMPTON ROAD, LONDON SW7 2DQ

They really lost their marbles

Peter Stothard chips away at a racy tale of scandal and statuary

Throughout the nine years of their marriage, Lady Elgin's husband lost his nose (to a disease that looked unhappily like syphilis); his money (and much of her money too) and the good name that he hoped would forever attach to his marbles. As a result, he also lost his wife — to a wealthy and wiser man who had to endure one of the messiest divorce suits of 19th century Scotland. This book is called *The Elgin Affair* and its subject is the "abduction" of the Parthenon sculptures and the "passions it aroused". But it is Lady Elgin's affair, not Lord Elgin's, that arouses the real passions of the author. In the past 200 years there have been many books bewailing the fate of the Parthenon at the hands of the Turks, the French, the Greeks themselves and, of course, the perfidious Scotsman, Elgin.

Most have shown at least some small concern for the sculptures themselves and their place in Greek history, European culture and the story of man's image of man. This one barely touches upon the marbles at all. It reads like the notes for a romping romance, and one that might have been written just as easily about the theft of a few rubies from a Biarritz safe-deposit.

Writers of adventure novels (and owners of rare rubies) have long known that the best way to protect jewels from thieves is to invent a curse upon all who come into illegal possession of them. Vrettos makes much of Lord Byron's propaganda poem, *The Curse of Minerva*, which describes the goddess's anger at seeing her temple despoiled by a man who carried much of it away to England and carved his name on what remained. Byron's *Minerva* curses Elgin, his homeland and his children. Vrettos writes with a novelist's certainty that this prophecy was amply fulfilled.

This licence allows him to wallow in the story of Elgin's ruin, the hostile

reception he received in England, not least from *The Times*, and his marital miseries. It also allows him to neglect such tedious historian's problems as whether Elgin had the legal authority to remove the marbles and whether, if he had not, they would have survived in anything like the good state in which they stand in London today.

He clearly would like to see the marbles returned to Athens. But he takes little part in the argument about why or how or with what effect this restitution might be achieved. Anyone who wants to hear a proper aesthetic and political case should buy Christopher Hitchens's brilliant 1987 polemic, *The Elgin Marbles: should they be*

returned to Greece? now republished in a Verso paperback.

Lady Elgin would almost certainly have agreed with the restituters. The glorious catalyst that the

marbles provided for European art meant nothing to a woman who always preferred heather to sculpture and prized good God-fearing Scots far above Athenian heathens of any age.

Mary Nisbet had been married only seven months when her husband was appointed as George III's Ambassador to Constantinople in 1799. At her first brush with political and archaeological intrigue in Naples, she was so unworriedly, Vrettos tells us, that she balked at sharing even a roof with the infamous Emma Hamilton and her lover, Lord Nelson. A few months exposure to the Orient — and a friendly female mauling at the hands of the Sultan's harem — may have loosened her up a little. But she never warmed to marble hunting.

Two separate forces dominated her life. The first was her husband's obsession with Greek art: this began as a desire to make paintings and casts in Turkish-controlled Athens and ended with his controversial decision to bring the original sculptures back to London. The second was the intermittent war at the time between England, France and



Artifact that was the agent of Lord Elgin's ruin: head of a horse, from the east pediment of the Parthenon, now in the British Museum

Turkey: the varying fortunes in this conflict had much the greatest impact on whether Lady Elgin might ever be able to get her husband — still without his nose but at least with some marbles and money — back home to their Scottish estates.

When Nelson's navy was protecting the Turks from the French, the authorities in Constantinople were happy to allow the British Ambassador to take away bits of stone for which they themselves had neither admiration nor use. When the politicians of London took a different course, the Turks would suddenly find the Parthenon to be a vital imperial interest. There were French rivals to Lord Elgin who had been at the task much longer. But they lacked a navy that could protect their interests so well.

The French did, however, have the last laugh. In 1803, when the Elgins were almost home with their treasure, they succeeded in locking his lordship away in a prison at Lourdes. Lady Elgin was allowed to return to Scotland

accompanied by a certain Robert Fergusson whose possession of a nose, a large fortune, his freedom and no known penchant for Parthenon marbles made him a highly attractive prospect to her. The subsequent divorce papers, with their eloquent testimony to carnal connections at No 60 Baker Street and in Fortunate and Blackwell's Edinburgh hotel, make much the most readable part of this book.

To glean the narrative from the other chapters may require some readers to suspend their sense of appropriate prose. "The Sicilian sky was on fire when HMS *Phaeton* dropped anchor off Palermo," begins chapter one. "A thousand minarets jabbed at the cloudless sky, while in the bustling harbour of Constantinople..." begins chapter two. And so on until Lady Elgin's lonely final days when "she could hear Athena's vengeful curse as she stood there paralysed, terrified by the relentless surge of time, the fierce growth of grass under her feet, the thunderous pulse of the firth on Scotland's ribs."

The shavings of a life stuck down

Duncan Fallowell

DON'T TELL SYBIL

An Intimate Memoir of

E. L. T. Mesens

By George Melly

Heinemann, £17.99

ISBN 0 434 66250 0



Mesens 1957 collage

EDOUARD MESENS was an alcoholic Belgian surrealist, born in 1903, who came to London before the war as an art dealer. In later life, working from a mansion flat near Lord's Cricket Ground, he achieved a reputation for collage, producing several hundred pieces, some of which are in national collections (the illustration at right is taken from *Surrealist Art* edited by Dawn Ades and published by Thames & Hudson at £24.95). Perhaps his most significant role in art history was as the supporter of Magritte during that artist's long, unadmired period. It was Magritte's work which formed the core of the outstanding collection left to two cousins when Mesens passed into an alcoholic coma and died in 1971.

Sybil is Mesens's English wife who ended up as chief buyer at Dickens and Jones department store. She doesn't figure greatly, although he does describe her as "an original and remarkable person". This must be on account of her custom of sniffing the armpits of the shop girls in order to maintain standards of fragrance.

Melly's narrative is especially candid. For this is also a love story — of sorts. Melly, an adherent of Surrealism since schooldays, visited Mesens in Soho while serving in the Royal Navy. The young sailor slept with both Mesens and his wife, separately and together. When his National Service ended Melly persuaded his father to invest in Mesens's London Gallery in Brook Street, and Mesens to give him his first job there. Alas, Surrealism was out — replaced by Existentialism — and the gallery failed, but not before both men had acquired works which would eventually stand them in good stead. Meanwhile George had started singing jazz.

It all happens against a background of foggy nostalgia: Peak Frean biscuits, Lyons's Corner Houses, the *News Chronicle*, Benzdrine inhalers, McFisheries and off-licences. Occasionally matters get more hard-core. There are, for example, a couple of fascinating pages on how to frame and hang pictures. But direct-

ly afterwards Melly writes: "I'm well aware that this didactic excursion may have glazed many an eyeball." Such a mistaken attitude explains how the book manages to be flabby as well as short. The prose style too could have done with tightening up. At one point all three elements — Surrealism, nostalgia, weak prose — come triumphantly together in "... a bottle of Tizer which I ate at my desk".

For a long time the image of Mesens is not clear — he is a back disappearing round corners. I began to think the book was a hoax of the Bruno Hat sort. But after the death of Sybil from leukaemia, Mesens goes downhill fast and his character attains a slobbish and vivid authenticity. By now Melly has become a very fashionable media figure and Mesens feels terribly left behind, causing embarrassing drunken scenes at Gloucester Crescent. But George has the biggest heart in the business. All is forgiven (except by Mrs Melly), and the story ends with an apt surrealist scene: when Melly's sister "entered the room where Edouard lay unconscious, she discovered a nun in full fig feeding him gin from a teaspoon. He'd have loved that."

When the personal is political

In this biography the rational Patricia Hollis has chosen the route of disintegration: Jennie Lee's political work in one set of chapters, her personal life, including her life with Nye Bevan, in another. We are ferried back and forth, often running over events already described and inevitably needing to be repeated. Yet we are never lost.

The least satisfactory parts relate to Jennie's own politics and her political life before the 1960s. While acknowledging Jennie's socialism to be central to both her personal and public life, including her relationship with Nye, its nature is never really explored. Nor is there much of an attempt to chart its development. Given the mass of documentation available, there are few direct quotations characterising Jennie's own political thought at the various periods of her life.

The author is not quite at home with this aspect of her subject, writing from a perspective which often characterises Jennie's political beliefs as "oppositional", "sectarian" and "far-left" (pejorative words not much in common use until the 1970s and 1980s). Less than

alone to the ideological driving force behind so much Labour politics of the 20th century, the politics in which Jennie Lee was nurtured and to which she was committed.

Less than justice is done to some of Jennie's political work as well — despite the well-researched account of it. When she lost her seat in 1931 and spent 15 years opposing fascism and campaigning for socialism in places like Spain, the United States and the Soviet Union, writing and lecturing in the midst of many of the most



Aneurin Bevan and Jennie Lee sign the marriage register, 1934

Caroline Benn

JENNIE LEE

A Life

By Patricia Hollis

OUP, £25

ISBN 0 19215300 0

Labour government. MP she wanted to be, but a ministerial career was not her own uppermost ambition as is evident in her return to Parliament in 1945 when she threw her political lot in with Nye Bevan: "Nye is my best hope of seeing the Labour Movement kept on socialist lines," Patricia Hollis sees this as subordinating her career to Nye's.

But it is fair comment in view of the evidence presented, which suggests that Jennie Lee looked all her life for powerful, older men to keep her going. The account of Jennie's indulgent upbringing by her father and grandfather, her clinging affair with the older, married MP, Frank Wise, her later dependence on Arnold Goodman and

Harold Wilson — all are sensitively analysed. The author particularly has the full measure of Jennie as the woman who passionately disliked traditional "women's concerns", and these passages are among the best in the biography, throwing light on a little-examined corner of feminist history. Jennie and Nye's own complex relationship is lovingly charted in the way it formed and flowered and lasted beyond the grave, while there are clear accounts of Jennie's working and family relationships, hiding none of the less admirable aspects of her character nor glossing over the many contradictions between class-consciousness and Labour aristocracy in the lives described. The measure of the author's success in recreating the tempestuous and opinionated Jennie is that she manages to elicit our admiration and affection for a woman whom she shows to have been disliked by most of those who ever worked with her — even if loved by the wider Labour world.

The biography is at its best when dealing with what the author calls "the de-politicised Jennie" of the later years. The discrete accounts of the Ministry of the Arts and the founding of the Open University go well beyond Jennie's role in either and become mini-histories in their own right: shrewd, balanced, informative and full of insights into these two near-mythical creations of Wilson's Labour Government which have gone on reverberating down the years. As twin records, they are unlikely to be bettered anywhere.

Caroline Benn's biography of Keir Hardie is published by Richard Cohen Books, priced £14.99.

Bargains of the week: exceptionally low prices to Hong Kong, winter sunshine in Portugal, festive breaks in Yorkshire



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A selection of last-minute holidays and travel opportunities at home, on the Continent and further afield, many at bargain prices:

BRITAIN

SUPERBREAK Mini-Holidays is offering 20 per cent savings on hotels for the next three months. Prices start at £24 a night with English breakfast at the Antelope Hotel, Sherborne, Dorset, while a day's half-board in Brighton and Torquay costs less than £40. Details: 0161-238 5257.

BIBURY beside the River Coln in the Cotswolds is pretty and unusual, and Sunvil UK is offering two-night breaks - with B&B and entrance to Chedworth, a Roman villa - at the Swan Hotel for £129. Details: 0181-232 9788.

THE LAST of the summer wine might be the last thing

anyone wants over Christmas, but the village where the TV series is filmed is among attractions included in three-night Yorkshire festive breaks on offer from Leger. The £249 price, with no single supplement, includes meals, sing-alongs and shopping, plus coach travel from many pick-up points on December 24. Details: 01709 839839.

CELEBRATING New Year's Eve at Claridge's must be the latest in one-upmanship. To mark the start of its centennial year, the hotel is holding a ball with champagne, a tuxedo band and a Scottish piper. Tickets cost £100 and you can sleep in a Claridge's bedroom for another £100. Details: 0171-409 6594.

THE Youth Hostels Association provided the wrong telephone number last week for its Yorkshire Moors and Dales guide. Now it is promoting hillwalking and mountaineering breaks around Derwentwater from £99 for a weekend in the new year, including full board. These are the correct numbers: for the Yorkshire guide 01727 845047, for the Lake District breaks 01768 777246.

EUROPE

PARIS is ideal for shedding winter blues and indulging in Christmas shopping and Time Out is proposing a three-night package to the French capital for £185. Travel by Eurostar any day until Christmas week, take B&B in a three-star hotel and receive several extras. Details: 0990 846363.

TENERIFE, always popular in winter, features in Co-op Travelcare late deals, with a fortnight's First Choice self-catering from tomorrow costing £229, flying from Gatwick. Airtours packages from Birmingham and Cardiff tomorrow and from Glasgow on Tuesday are also available. Details: 0541 500388.

PORTUGAL is our oldest ally and will remain so with prices like this: £139 for a fortnight's self-catering with F&S & M. Fly from Gatwick on Saturday to catch up with the friendly people and some winter sunshine. Details: 0116-250 7116.

BERLIN's Schönefeld airport will be served from next Monday and AB Airlines

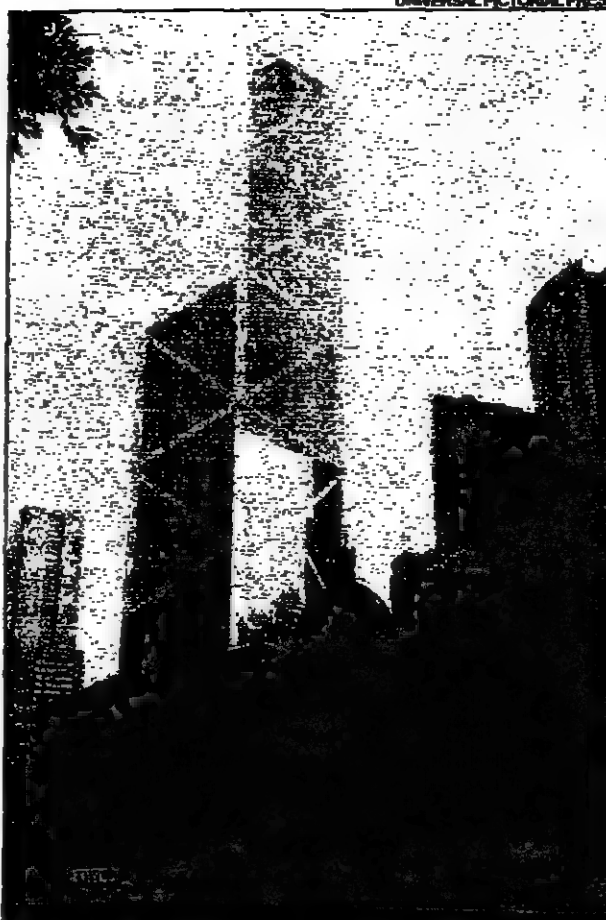
is celebrating its newest route with a £99 return introductory offer. Tax extra; flights every evening except Saturday. Details: 0345 464748.

CYPRUS for £179 for a week at a beach hotel with half-board is among the latest offers from Sunset Holidays. Fly from Gatwick next Wednesday and save £76. Details: 01204 434343.

PALMA and Malaga for £59 return early next month feature in flight-only deals from Lunn Poly. Details from the company's Holiday Shops.

THE CHRISTMAS market in Bruges can be enjoyed, and it will be easy to bring back the shopping, on a long one-day excursion on December 20 with the London-based Brents Coach Tours. The £26 price includes all coach and ferry travel. Details: 01923 22160.

THE CAR goes free on Scandinavian Seaways' crossings from Harwich to Hamburg and Newcastle to Amsterdam until the end of February if booked by December 19. Return passenger fares start from £30 for Holland and £57 for Germany. Details: 0990 333000.



Hong Kong: for the lowest prices, you must move fast

LONG-HAUL

HONG KONG can be visited at very low prices in the coming weeks, but you need to move fast because today is the last chance to book the best deals, Tony Dave writes.

The slump in the Far East's so-called tiger economies, the haze that has blighted countries further south and British lack of interest in the colony now controlled by China have reduced tourist numbers. The result is hundreds of empty hotel rooms and airline seats on flights to and from Hong Kong - and bargain prices as the industry tries to keep the cash flowing.

One of the best offers has come from the Far East Travel Centre, which offers return flights from Heathrow and Manchester, plus three nights' accommodation in the first six weeks of 1998 for £275 a person. BA and Qantas have similar deals but they will cost £299 after today.

Details: FETC 0171-414 8808, BA 0990 224224, Qantas 0900 673464.

GETTING to Goa is becoming cheaper and cheaper: a fortnight's half-board costs £299 with Lunn Poly,

providing you can make next Thursday's flight from Manchester. Details from the company's Holiday Shops.

TORONTO flights for £169 are on offer from Flying Colours, leaving Gatwick on December 5, 8 and 10, returning within a week or fortnight. Details: 01204 701000.

BAHAMAS all-inclusive holidays, with children under 12 paying £250, are available from Bon Voyage. The offer applies to week-long holidays between January 1 and April 2 at a resort with sporting facilities, including golf and tennis. Adults pay £1,117. Details: 01703 330552.

● All prices are per person and based on two sharing a room, unless otherwise stated.

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House of Lords

Law Report November 27 1997

Court of Appeal

Logical basis of medical opinion required

Bolitho v City and Hackney Health Authority

Before Lord Browne-Wilkinson, Lord Slynn of Hadley, Lord Nolan, Lord Hoffman and Lord Clyde

[Speeches November 13]

A court was not bound to hold that a defendant doctor escaped liability for negligent treatment or diagnosis just because he led evidence from a number of medical experts who were genuinely of the opinion that his treatment or diagnosis accorded with sound medical practice.

The court had to be satisfied that the experts of the body of opinion relied on could demonstrate that such opinion had a logical basis.

In particular in cases involving, as they often did, the weighing of risks against benefits, the judge, before accepting a body of opinion as being reasonable, reasonable or respectable, would need to be satisfied that, in forming their views, the experts had directed their minds to the question of comparative risks and benefits and had reached a defensible conclusion on the matter.

The House of Lords so stated in dismissing an appeal by the administrators of the estate of Patrick Nigel Bolitho (deceased) from the dismissal by the Court of Appeal on December 15, 1992 of her appeal from Mr Justice Hutchingson on February 15, 1991, on a claim for damages for medical negligence as a result of treatment received by the deceased, boy aged two, at St Bartholomew's Hospital on January 16 and 17, 1984, who suffered catastrophic brain damage as a result of cardiac arrest induced by respiratory failure.

Mr Daniel Berman, QC, Miss Deirdre Goodwin, QC, and Mr Robert Owen, QC, for Mr

Terence Coghlan, QC, for the health authority.

LORD BROWNE-WILKINSON said that when the case came to trial there was a conflict of evidence between a nursing sister and a doctor as to what was said in the course of calls to the doctor.

The judge accepted the sister's account and on that basis the defendant accepted that the doctor was in breach of his duty of care in not attending Patrick or arranging for a suitable deputy to do so.

Negligence having been established, the question of causation had to be decided. By the end of the trial it was common ground, first, that if the defendant had not been negligent, the child would not have died; and second, that such negligence would have had to be carried out before the final catastrophic episode.

The judge had identified the questions as: once it was held that the doctor was negligent in failing to attend at either 12.40pm or 2pm, the sole issue was whether Patrick would on one or other of these occasions have been injured.

If the doctor would have attended, then the plaintiff would succeed, whether or not that was a course which all reasonably competent practitioners would have followed.

However, the doctor would not have been injured, then the plaintiff could only succeed if such failure was contrary to accepted medical practice.

As to the first issue, the doctor's evidence was that she would not have attended, and the judge accepted that.

As to the second issue, the judge had evidence from eight distinguished medical experts.

Five were called on behalf of Patrick and were all of the view

that over the last two hours Patrick was in a state of respiratory distress progressing inexorably to hypoxia and respiratory failure.

The defendants' experts considered the facts as recounted by the sister and the nurse indicated that Patrick was quite well apart from the two quite sudden acute episodes at 12.40pm and 2pm.

The judge held that the evidence of the sister and the nurse, which he accepted, was inconsistent with a child passing through the stages of progressive hypoxia.

The judge directed himself as to the law by reference to *Maynard v West Midlands Regional Health Authority* (1984) 1 WLR 634, 639 and held that it had not been proved that the admitted breach of duty by the defendants had caused the catastrophic which had occurred to Patrick.

The local clinicians of the test for the standard of care required of a doctor or any other person professing some skill or competence was the direction to the jury given by Mr Justice Millett in *Bolton v Friern Hospital Management Committee* (1957) 1 WLR 582, 587. It was that test which was repeated in different words in *Maynard's* case.

Before their Lordships, Mr Brennan, submitted: first, that the *Bolton* test had no application in deciding questions of causation and, second, that the judge misdirected himself by treating it as being so relevant.

That argument, which was raised for the first time by amendment to the notice of appeal in the Court of Appeal, commended itself to Lord Justice Simon Brown and was the basis on which he dissented. His Lordship had no doubt that in the generality of cases the proposition of law was correct but equally he had no doubt that the judge in the circumstances of the

present case was not guilty of any self-misdirection.

There were two questions for the judge to decide on causation: 1. What would the doctor have done, or authorised to be done, if she had attended Patrick?

2. If she would not have attended, would that have been negligent?

The *Bolton* test had no relevance to the first of these questions but was central to the second.

There could be no doubt that, as the majority of the Court of Appeal held, the judge had directed himself correctly in accordance with that test.

However, he had also expressed these doubts: "Mr Brennan also advanced a powerful argument, which I have to say as a layman appealed to me, to the effect that the views of the defendants' experts simply were not logical or sensible. Given the recent and more remote history of Patrick's illness, eliminating in these two episodes, surely it was unreasonable and illogical not to anticipate the recurrence of a life-threatening event and take the step which it was acknowledged would probably have saved Patrick from harm? This was the sole opinion, whatever was suspected as the cause, or even if the cause was thought to be a mystery. The difficulty of this approach, as in the event I think, Mr Brennan acknowledged, was in effect that it invited me to substitute my own views for those of the medical experts."

Before their Lordships Mr Brennan had repeated those arguments. His Lordship agreed with the submissions to the extent that the court was not bound to hold that a defendant doctor escaped liability for negligent treatment or diagnosis just because he led evidence from a number of medical experts who were genuinely of the opinion that his treatment or diagnosis accorded with sound medical practice.

In the *Bolton* case, Mr Justice Millett stated (at 687) that the defendant had to have acted in accordance with the practice accepted as proper by a "respectable body of medical men". Later (at 688) he referred to "a standard of practice recognised as proper by a competent reasonable body of opinion". In the passage cited from *Maynard's* case, the judge referred to a "respectable" body of professional opinion.

The use of those adjectives—"respectable", "reasonable" and "competent"—all showed that the court had to be satisfied that the experts of the body of opinion relied upon could demonstrate that such opinion had a logical basis.

In particular in cases involving, as they so often did, the weighing of risks against benefits, the judge before accepting a body of opinion as being reasonable, reasonable or respectable, would need to be satisfied that, in forming their views, the experts had directed their minds to the question of comparative risks and benefits and had reached a defensible conclusion on the matter.

His Lordship emphasised that it would seldom be right for a judge to reach the conclusion that views held by a competent medical expert were unreasonable. He turned to consider whether this was one of those rare cases.

In his judgment it plainly was not. The judge and the Court of Appeal reached the right conclusion on the evidence and his Lordship would dismiss the appeal.

Lord Slynn of Hadley delivered a concurring speech and Lord Nolan, Lord Hoffman and Lord Clyde agreed.

Solicitors: Irwin Mitchell, Sheffield; Birdnam & Co.

Council shelters behind its own unlawful act

Stretch v West Dorset District Council

Before Lord Justice Nourse, Lord Justice Peter Gibson and Lord Justice Otton

[Judgment November 11]

A local authority's power under section 164 of the Local Government Act 1933 to let land in its possession did not include the power to grant an option to renew a lease.

The Court of Appeal so held, inter alia, when dismissing an appeal by the plaintiff leaseholder, Mr Michael Stretch, from the order of Mr Justice Chadwick sitting in Weymouth District Registry on April 25, 1996, whereby he struck out his originating summons holding that he was not entitled to exercise the option to renew for a further term of 21 years the lease of premises at Poundbury West Camp Estate, Dorset, that had been granted to him in 1969 by Dorchester Borough Council, the predecessor of West Dorset District Council.

Mr Peter Birt, QC, and Mr Stephen Rubin for Mr Stretch; Mr Kirk Reynolds, QC, for the council.

LORD JUSTICE PETER GIBSON said that 14 acres of industrial land were let to the plaintiff in 1969 for 22 years.

He had developed the premises into six units, all of which were sub-let, some of the sub-leases expressed in continue beyond the expiry date of the 1969 lease.

A clause in the lease granted the plaintiff an option to renew the 1969 lease for a further 21 years. In October 1990 the plaintiff gave notice to exercise that option.

The effect of the 1933 Act was that a local authority could make dispositions of its property only through the exercise of powers conferred by statute on it.

Section 164 of the 1933 Act provided: "A local authority may let any land which they may possess." The question whether that power included a power to grant an option to renew had been considered in *Farrage v North Wilts District Council* (1981) 140 Q.B. 454, 141 Q.B. 454, 142 Q.B. 454, 143 Q.B. 454, 144 Q.B. 454, 145 Q.B. 454, 146 Q.B. 454, 147 Q.B. 454, 148 Q.B. 454, 149 Q.B. 454, 150 Q.B. 454, 151 Q.B. 454, 152 Q.B. 454, 153 Q.B. 454, 154 Q.B. 454, 155 Q.B. 454, 156 Q.B. 454, 157 Q.B. 454, 158 Q.B. 454, 159 Q.B. 454, 160 Q.B. 454, 161 Q.B. 454, 162 Q.B. 454, 163 Q.B. 454, 164 Q.B. 454, 165 Q.B. 454, 166 Q.B. 454, 167 Q.B. 454, 168 Q.B. 454, 169 Q.B. 454, 170 Q.B. 454, 171 Q.B. 454, 172 Q.B. 454, 173 Q.B. 454, 174 Q.B. 454, 175 Q.B. 454, 176 Q.B. 454, 177 Q.B. 454, 178 Q.B. 454, 179 Q.B. 454, 180 Q.B. 454, 181 Q.B. 454, 182 Q.B. 454, 183 Q.B. 454, 184 Q.B. 454, 185 Q.B. 454, 186 Q.B. 454, 187 Q.B. 454, 188 Q.B. 454, 189 Q.B. 454, 190 Q.B. 454, 191 Q.B. 454, 192 Q.B. 454, 193 Q.B. 454, 194 Q.B. 454, 195 Q.B. 454, 196 Q.B. 454, 197 Q.B. 454, 198 Q.B. 454, 199 Q.B. 454, 200 Q.B. 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RACING: IRISH-BORN AMATEUR MAKES GOOD IMPRESSION WITH SINGLE-MINDED APPROACH TO CAREER

Teething problems prove no bar to Durack's appetite

By CHRIS McGRATH

LONG since embedded in the turf of an Irish point-to-point field, you might call them the wisdom teeth of a National Hunt jockey. Perhaps they are still there — a clue for future anthropologists, pondering what macabre ritual could explain this circle of birch altars round an old field. They would not be particularly far off the mark, either. The day Seamus Durack had his mouth smashed was indeed the day he joined the tribe. The young brave was blooded, set unflinchingly apart.

Last month, on a busy Saturday, punter's name on the Market Rasen card: Mr S Durack (7). The unknown amateur had two rides for the small Lambourn yard of Dai Williams. First Hermes Harvest, returning from a long absence, routed an odds-on favourite with a confident round of jumping in front. Those who noted his partner's calm demeanour could have been forgiven for assuming an hour later, Symbol Of Success, a novice, skidded to his knees when clear at the third last. Durack sat tight, did not panic, and nursed back his momentum to win easily.

Durack has ridden nine other winners this season, which — added to three earlier successes, and one on the flat during the summer — have now reduced his allowance to 5lb.

His achievements so far certainly do not merit particular attention. But punters should be alerted to the opportunity his concession affords them, while it lasts, and these more purely motivated should know that Williams rates him "the best amateur we've seen since Richard Dunwoody". He hopes Durack can prove as much when partnering Hermes Harvest in the Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup at Newbury on Saturday.

There is, moreover, ample evidence that Durack is determined not to squander his gifts. At 22, he is making a relatively late start. This is

because he is bright — which his softly spoken, unassuming manner cannot disguise. Durack was born in Australia, but his parents returned to Tipperary soon afterwards. His father, a doctor, impressed upon the adolescent Seamus — entranced by a local racing yard — that he should not put all his eggs in such a threadbare basket. While Seamus revealed his instincts, aboard distracted yearlings and then a few point-to-pointers, he dutifully persisted with his education. "I finished school, and then went to the University of Warwick for a course in equine science," he explains. "I did well in the exams, and can go back, but decided to come here a year ago last July." He joined Philip Hobbs in the West Country, but did not start getting rides until February.

One day, he rang Williams for one. "I didn't give it to him, but let him come up and school him a dozen," the trainer recalls. "They all jumped well, all of them. You can't get that lucky, I thought. He had something, I can't praise him because he hasn't got a big head. He's very aware, and keen to learn more, all the time. He's very critical of himself, no critical sometimes. Doesn't drink or smoke. In fact, he should probably fraternise a bit more, if anything."

It has not escaped Durack's notice that Tony McCoy is similarly single-minded. He only treasures the words of Yogi Berra, former Olympic medalist, and jumping troubleshooter, to "keep ignorant horses in training." "He is very, very dedicated," Breiner says. "He's getting opportunities now, but it's making the most of them because he has been prepared to work hard. Obviously he needs more experience, but I'm a great believer in confidence, in every walk of life, and horses do seem to go well for him. It's a tough sport, though, and he needs luck. Luck to stay in one piece, and luck to get on the right horses."



Durack proves he has earned the right to be a jump jockey with a toothless grin

Eudipe confirmed for Hennessy as field takes shape

By OUR RACING STAFF

MARTIN PIPE confirmed yesterday that Eudipe will take his chance in the Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup at Newbury on Saturday — but without the blinkers he wore when beaten by Sunny Bay at Haydock last week.

"They just did not seem to work, so we will leave them off on Saturday and hope for the best," Pipe said. His other entry, Indian Tracker, will not run unless the ground turns soft.

The ground remained good at Newbury yesterday. A course spokeswoman said: "There was just one millimetre of rain overnight and the going is good on the chase course, good to soft on the hurdles track."

Paul Nicholls will wait until tomorrow before deciding whether last season's Scottish Grand National winner, Belmont King, takes his place in the Hennessy. "I've got a feeling the ground will ride on the slow side of good, in which case my intention is to run but I will wait until Friday to make a final decision," Nicholls said.

With Tony McCoy likely to be claimed to ride Eudipe in the race, Belmont King will be partnered by Timmy Murphy, Nicholls's new stable jockey, for the first time in public.

Prospects for Coome Hill's participation in the £70,000-added feature have improved after the gelding's workout yesterday. "Coome Hill worked well today and we just might have a try on Saturday," his trainer, Walter Dennis, said.

The former top hunter chaser, an impressive winner of the Hennessy last year, pulled a muscle and

THUNDERER

1.25 Glenduff
1.55 My Hero
2.25 Bannagour

2.55 Fresh Fruit Daily
3.25 Marmy's Choice
3.55 Frontier Flight

GOING: GOOD

TOTE JACKPOT MEETING

1.25 BAR NOVEMBER HANDICAP HURDLE (23.87.2m) (11 runners)

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GOING: GOOD

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GOING: GOOD

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1.25 BAR NOVEMBER HANDICAP HURDLE (23.87.2m) (11 runners)

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1.55 MAPLE JUVENILE NOVICES SELLING HURDLE (S-10; 2m) (12 runners)

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2.25 MEMPHIS PLYWOOD NOVICES CHASE (23.08.2m) (14 runners)

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2.55 BEECH NOVICES HURDLE (23.08.2m) (13 runners)

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3.25 NEWBOP PLYWOOD HANDICAP CHASE (24.54.5m) (9 runners)

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12.45 ALLIED DOMCO NOVICES HURDLE (S-7; 2m) (10 runners)

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2.15 BARRY D THENTHAM CHALLENGE BOWL HANDICAP CHASE (24.45.2m) (7 runners)

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1.00 ROSLEY NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE (S-7; 2m) (14 runners)

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2.35 ASHLEYBANK INVESTMENTS HANDICAP CHASE (24.55.3m) (10 runners)

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1.45 PETER J DOUGLAS ENGINEERING LTD SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (21.01.2m) (12 runners)

1.45 PETER J DOUGLAS ENGINEERING LTD SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (21.01.2m) (12 runners)

3.45 ALLIED DOMCO MARKET BAYERS HANDICAP HURDLE (22.03.2m) (8 runners)

3.45 ALLIED DOMCO MARKET BAYERS HANDICAP HURDLE (22.03.2m) (8 runners)

2.05 EBF NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE (22.05.2m) (10 runners)

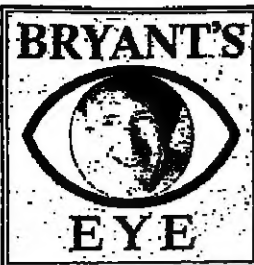
2.05 EBF NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE (22.05.2m) (10 runners)

3.35 ASPATHRA AMATEUR RIDERS HANDICAP HURDLE (22.05.2m) (11 runners)

3.35 ASPATHRA AMATEUR RIDERS HANDICAP HURDLE (22.05.2m) (11 runners)

Unusual remedies that turn convention on its head

Sport in search of miracle cure



In sport, the really dangerous opponent, the one who can stop you in your tracks forever, is injury. And the lengths to which sportsmen will go to avoid getting hurt or find a cure for aches, pains and pulls are amazing. No regime is too eccentric, no treatment too unconventional.

Take one of the most surprising sports news items of the week — the report that two New Zealanders won a 3,000-mile transatlantic rowing race in 41 days. It was alarming not just because of their speed — they knocked 32 days off the record — but because of the revelation that they rowed most of the way naked.

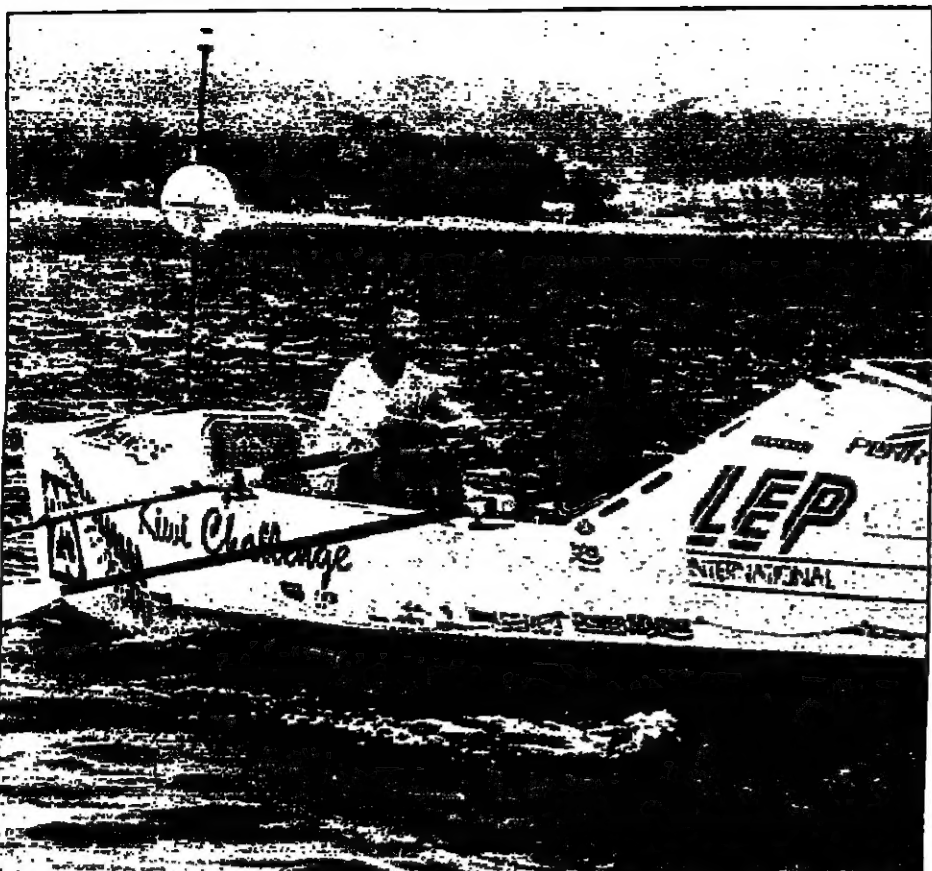
Phil Stubbs, a policeman and lifeguard rower, explained that he and his teammate, Rob Hamill, "had a lot of problems with chafing and sores during four-day rows in practice".

"We experimented with seats and tried rowing shorts with sheepskin pads in them," he said, "but, in 35 degrees of heat, that's a bit like wearing a sheepskin nappy. So we just put the sheepskins on the seats and rowed naked except for gloves. Our fingers are a bit numb, but apart from that we're still very fit."

In a bid to keep very fit, other sportsmen have tried just about everything from faith healers to seaweed baths. In football, faith healers have spilt their way into the game at the very highest level, with players and coaches such as Glenn Hoddle, Ian Wright and Bryan Robson all consulting healers, or referring other people to them.

Gary Lineker used acupuncture for his hamstring, while Tony Adams has said that he would opt for the magic of alternative medicine rather than submit himself again to the surgeon's knife.

When Eric Cantona played for Manchester United, he took herbal baths and aromatherapy, with visits to The Medicine Shop and Clinic in Alderley Edge before every game for treatment.



Stubbs and Hamill found an unconventional solution to chafing during their row, before celebrating in Barbados, right

The champions of strange cures come from many sports. Leonard Walters, the former international athlete, who ran the 400 metres for Great Britain between 1967 and 1972, said that he was crocked by knee problems until he discovered coral calcium.

"I tried all known remedies with no success," he said. "I was virtually living on anti-inflammatory medication."

"Then I met a Norwegian doctor, who suggested coral calcium. I was sceptical, but willing to try anything. I started taking granules in my drinks and, after three or four weeks, the pain began to subside. Now, incredibly, I can play tennis, golf and run every day without even a knee brace."

Coral calcium is collected from a reef around a couple of Japanese islands that boast the oldest and healthiest people in Japan. Similar claims are made for all sorts of potions and appliances.

One man who knows all about injuries, to man and animals, is Billy Wilson. He runs a horse sanctuary near Wolverhampton and, for exercise, has completed five London-Marathons. He re-

corded his fastest time while running as the back end of a pantomime horse.

This week, he sent me a powerful magnet on a wrist strap. "Put this on and stand back for fireworks in your running," he instructed. "All ageing pains will vanish and I firmly believe that if the front-runners in this year's Flora London Marathon wear them, we will see a world record broken."

The device is called the Bioflow and uses a magnetic field "to put a charge into the bloodstream, encouraging the blood to accept more oxygen and work more efficiently."

Chris Brasher, the Olympic gold medal-winner and founder of the London Marathon, is one of those who has strapped on a Bioflow and cast aside his knee braces — but he did find himself suffering from one unusual side-effect. While taking part in a combined sailing and long-distance running competition, the Universal 500, as part of a crew skippered by Sir Robin Knox-Johnston, he had some-

thing of a crisis of self-confidence when he found his legendary navigational skills deserted him and he got lost in the dark on the cliffs of Dorset.

It was only after he had discarded three compasses and had a row with the manufacturers that he realised that a powerful magnet on your wrist may do wonders for your knees, but plays hell with your compass.

Perhaps Brasher should try an even more unlikely therapy being pioneered in the United States. There, George Strazniskas has apparently fixed his knees using WD-40 — the universal lubricant found lurking in tool kits and garages in its familiar blue and yellow spray can.

ner, once qualified for the United States Olympic marathon trials at the age of 36, said that he heard of someone using WD-40 "spray therapy" for pain and tried it on a knee that had hobbled him for three years.

"After two days, there seemed to be less pain," he reported. "I had been taking six to eight 200mg tablets of Ibuprofen daily, but after a week I felt so good that I stopped taking any at all."

After a month, he said: "I spray the knee with a light mist three times a day and take one or two tablets of Ibuprofen daily. My daily run (four to six miles) is better than at any time in the past three years."

Who can tell what other magic lurks in the dark recesses behind the logos of those sports bags? For these days, when it comes to keeping on the right side of that very thin line that separates peak fitness from injury and breakdown, whether it is WD-40, sheepskin or magnets, sportsmen need all the help they can get.

JOHN BRYANT



Cantona: herbal help

CYCLING

Tour to be new force in Britain

THE Prudential, the country's biggest insurance company, will sponsor a new 850-mile international nine-day tour next year.

The Pru Tour, from May 23, will start in Stirling and wind down the East Coast of England, across the Pennines, into the Midlands and Wales and then east to Kent, before finishing on a one-mile circuit in the City of London.

Prudential yesterday described the tour, which carries £100,000 prize-money, as "the most ambitious ever staged in Britain". The sponsors, newcomers to cycle racing, plan to back the tour for at least four

years, at an estimated cost of £4 million.

Peter King, chief executive of the British Cycling Federation, described the tour as "good news and big news". Another to welcome it was Chris Boardman, Britain's leading rider, who said he would lead the entry of his French Gan team in the event.

"The race will be ideal for me and the team," he said. "It comes just five weeks before the start of the Tour de France. It couldn't be better. I don't often get the chance these days to ride in the UK."

Prudential have appointed Sport For Television (SFT), organisers of the Tour de France, to play a similar role in their event.

Precise route details have still to be agreed with police, but all stage starts and finishes are confirmed, and the organisers promise that the route will include regular testing hill climbs.

PRU TOUR ROUTE: May 23: Stirling, 100 miles; May 24: Edinburgh to Newcastle (100 miles); May 25: Edinburgh to York (112 miles); May 26: Manchester to Blackpool (111 miles); May 27: Chester to Nottingham (100 miles); May 28: Birmingham to Cardiff (104 miles); May 29: Bristol to Reading (98 miles); May 30: Chester to Walsley (100 miles); May 31: London circuit (50 miles).

هكذا من راحل

TELEVISION CHOICE

In praise of hypnotherapy

Natural Born Healers
Channel 4, 8.30pm

Tonight's complementary medicine is hypnotherapy and we watch it being practised on Eric Hirsch, a 46-year-old catering manager who has long suffered from the painful disease of irritable bowel syndrome. Conventional treatments have failed to ease the problem but Hirsch's GP is still wary about referring him to the hypnotherapy unit at a Manchester hospital. Here Dr Peter Whorwell, no quack but a trained consultant, leads a team of therapists and claims that 75 per cent of his patients get better. The key to the treatment (nobody pretends it is a cure) is teaching the patient ways of controlling his condition. We follow Hirsch through 12 sessions over three months, at a cost of £660. He is pleased with result, though there may be dangers in generalising from one case.

United Tastes of America
Channel 4, 8.30pm

The surprise about Dorinda Hafner's series on American food is that it has taken her until episode five to cover the Jewish influence. There are, after all, more Jews in New York alone than anywhere else, not excluding Israel. Arriving in their thousands from central and eastern Europe towards the end of the last century and the start of this, they have contributed hugely to the national cuisine. From sampling pastrami sandwiches at Katz's Deli on the Lower East Side, Hafner makes her boisterous way across town to the Hasidic community, distinguished by their beards, wig for the women and adherence to strictly kosher rules. For those wanting to try the recipes the show moves much too fast and is too short on detail, though this may be to boost sales of the tie-in book.

Possibilities
Channel 4, 9.00pm

Britons who have made their home in Australia provide a lively theme for a series by Brian Hill, who was responsible for that unforgettable look at a Home Counties golf club. Hill's first group of ex-pats offer contrasting views of their adopted country. Simon Collins is an advertising man, once with Saatchi, who has settled easily into the



Advertising man Simon Collins (C4 9pm)

Aussie way of life. We find him shooting a commercial for Australian cheese and becoming a father. Jackie and John, on the other hand, are the ultimate winging it. They dislike almost everything about Australia, from blue skies to barbecued food, and cannot wait to get back to their native Liverpool. Rowan Ayers, once with the BBC, came out 22 years ago and admits he is stuck, an "economic prisoner". But he still pines for Chiswick High Street, especially when he is doing the washing up.

Scare Stories: Running on Empty
BBC2, 9.25pm

In the late 1960s and early 1970s there was no shortage of gloomy predictions that the world's stocks of oil, natural gas and essential metals were running out and that industrial society faced collapse. The second film in this mind-scrunching series examines these gloomy predictions and the credentials of the people behind them and attempts to explain why, by and large, they have failed to come true. At the time the arguments seemed plausible enough. Helped by a receptive media, the ideas of campaigning groups such as Friends of the Earth became the new orthodoxy. The oil crisis of 1973 seemed to prove the pessimists right. But the worry over oil now is about pollution, not availability. Some doomwatchers admit they get it wrong. Others insist they will be proved right. Peter Waymark

RADIO CHOICE

Smoky Robinson's Soul Selection
Radio 2, 9.00pm

The man who turned down the Beatles has near-legendary status in popular music but early in this, the first of a series of soul music, we discover the man who turned down Smokey Robinson and the Miracles. Robinson recalls a record company executive saying that "there is already a group with a guy singing high and a girl in the group so we would never make it". That group was The Platters so one can see the record producer's point, though he must have been chewing his knuckles for years thereafter. Robinson introduces these programmes with great panache and a lightness of touch that sits well with the music, which is interspersed with anecdotes from Robinson's long career as one of the great figures of soul.

RADIO 1

6.30am Kevin Grawley and Zeb 8.00 Simon Mayo 12.30 to 1.00pm John Peel 1.00pm News 2.00pm Mark Radcliffe 4.00pm Dave Pearce 6.15pm News 6.30pm Evening Session 8.30pm News 9.00pm News 9.15pm News 9.30pm News 9.45pm News 10.00pm News 10.15pm News 10.30pm News 10.45pm News 11.00pm News 11.15pm News 11.30pm News 11.45pm News 12.00pm News 12.15pm News 12.30pm News 12.45pm News 1.00pm News 1.15pm News 1.30pm News 1.45pm News 2.00pm News 2.15pm News 2.30pm News 2.45pm News 3.00pm News 3.15pm News 3.30pm News 3.45pm News 4.00pm News 4.15pm News 4.30pm News 4.45pm News 5.00pm News 5.15pm News 5.30pm News 5.45pm News 6.00pm News 6.15pm News 6.30pm News 6.45pm News 7.00pm News 7.15pm News 7.30pm News 7.45pm News 8.00pm News 8.15pm News 8.30pm News 8.45pm News 9.00pm News 9.15pm News 9.30pm News 9.45pm News 10.00pm News 10.15pm News 10.30pm News 10.45pm News 11.00pm News 11.15pm News 11.30pm News 11.45pm News 12.00pm News 12.15pm News 12.30pm News 12.45pm News 1.00pm News 1.15pm News 1.30pm News 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Assailed by grisly fascination on three fronts

The great thing about *The X-Files* (BBC1) is that it is one of those science-fiction dramas where you never have to suspend your disbelief. You have to screw it up into a tight ball and launch it from Cape Canaveral. Take last night's episode, *Leonard Bents* (Bent's Paul McCrane) is an Emergency Medical Technician in Philadelphia who dies in a car crash. He doesn't just die; he is decapitated. Mulder and Scully come into the picture when Bent's headless corpse gets... What? Gets stolen? Nope. Begins singing *Sweet Caroline*? Nope. Not that either. Gets up and walks out of the hospital morgue? Bingo!

Next thing you know, Leonard's even got a brand new head on his shoulders. He just grows new ones. He can do this with other body parts, too. So when a security guard catches him up to no good and handcuffs him, Leonard simply tears off his own thumb and

slips free. By this time, even Mulder and Scully are beginning to suspect that there is something unusual about this Bent fellow: for one thing, he definitely died once before, six years ago. Only Bob Monkhouse dies this regularly and still manages to survive.

Not that Scully can swallow Mulder's wild theory, that "Bent tore off his thumb because he knew he could grow another one." Scully: Mulder, but it is just doesn't work that way. Mulder: But it is unimaginable! Is Bent's ability to regenerate any greater a leap forward than our ancestors' ability to communicate with language and walk upright?

Scully: But language, evolution, is a series of steps, not leaps. Mulder: Recent evolutionary theory would disagree. What scientists call punctuated evolution, it theorises that evolutionary advances are cataclysmic, not gradual; that evolu-

tion occurs not along a straight graphable line, but in huge fits and starts. And that the unimaginable happens in between the gaps.

So where is David Attenborough when you need him to fill you in on recent evolutionary theory? Only gambling in the Arctic.

You won't find many stars trekking to the Arctic just to film opening remarks for a *Wildlife Special* on the Polar bear (BBC1). Certainly not Michael Caine. He is doing "When you have a high standard of living, sometimes you must make a very low standard of movie." But Caine draws the line at the Arctic. "When I open up a script," he once confessed, "and it says 'Nome, Alaska. Our hero is walking in the blinding snow with a dog sled' I close it again. Quickly."

But if you want to film polar bears, you have little choice. Having bothered to make the

journey in the first place, producer Martha Holmes, and cameramen, Doug Allan and Martin Saunders, went beyond the call of duty by taking such dramatic underwater footage of polar bears that they have set a daunting benchmark for the other five programmes in this series. "Here, for the first time," said Attenborough in his husky hiss, "is a full picture of that most formidable and massive of hunters."

Caine wouldn't have been right for the part, anyway. Polar bears are fun to watch. But you don't envy them their lifestyle. Finding breakfast takes up most of their life. Polar bears will travel thousands of miles across frozen ice in search of a tasty seal pup. Their starting sense of smell means that they can sniff a seal even when it's a kilometre away, and sheltering in an underground lair. The bear creeps the final few yards so as not to alert the pup, then pounds on the ice with his front paws to break and enter the lair. By then the seal pup has usually sunk off into an underground waterway. In human terms this is like walking from London to Aberdeen to buy your groceries only to find, when you get there, that the supermarket has closed down. It's not what you would call much of a life.

As is often the case in Nature, the female has the extra burden of

domestic duties. A female polar bear who has a couple of cubs in tow not only has to find food for all three of them, but also has to steer clear of any males. A large male would happily kill the cubs. Why? Because this would make the female sexually receptive again and he could then ensure that the next generation carries his genes.

It sounds almost as distasteful as Bent's regenerating head. But not as distasteful as Billy Butlin, the rags-to-riches holiday camp king, who was the subject of *Secret Lives* (Channel 4). Butlin said that there were "four things in a man's life — women, money, ambition and power," which showed us two things: that he clearly wasn't a big fan of Twigglets; and that he would probably end his days a rich, greedy, serially married, deceitful, sluggish, knighted, unhappy and unpleasant social climber. He did.

Particularly fascinating was the film footage of life at Butlin's camps in their 1950s heyday (those beauty parades), along with insider details of life backstage at Skegness, Clacton and Filey.

Many waitresses, it seems, were prostitutes, who made up their pitiful wages by working flat out on their backs. No wonder it was "Good morning, happy campers."

As for those famous Redcoats, they sweated in pursuit of the coveted Ram's Head trophy of "Rescue of the Week," which was awarded on points: ten points for the "Holiday Princess"; 15 for the "Clamorous Granny"; and 20 points for the general manager's wife. Knickers were needed as verification. So when people told you that being a Redcoat was good training for a future performing career on stage or screen, they must have meant performing in something like *Sey Sam, The Windowcleaner Man*.

REVIEW

Joe Joseph



As an HTV West except:

12.55-1.25 A Country Practice (2930718)
1.50-5.40 Shortland Street (9534911)
5.50-6.00 Air Watch (771195)
6.25 Central News (953138)
6.55-7.00 Lifestyle (958178)
10.40-11.40 Videotach Special (850195)
12.40am Punny Business (6554577)
1.15 Planet Mirth (630480)
1.40 Rockman (8302157)
2.35 God's Gift (2813242)
3.30 Life and Loud (3770206)
4.25 Central Jobfinder '97 (8150022)
5.30 Aalen Eye (6976732)

CENTRAL

As HTV West except:

12.55-1.25 A Country Practice (2930718)
1.50-5.40 Shortland Street (9534911)
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6.25 Central News (953138)
6.55-7.00 Lifestyle (958178)
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WEST COUNTRY

As HTV West except:

12.55-1.25 A Country Practice (2930718)
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WILTSHIRE

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3.30 Life and Loud (3770206)
4.25 Central Jobfinder '97 (8150022)
5.30 Aalen Eye (6976732)

STARS

7.00am The Big Breakfast (84398)
9.00 Yegolion (715405)
11.30 Powerhouse (7089)
12.00 Sesame Street (59850)
12.30pm Rick Lake (30992)
1.00 Slot Mollin (59014550)
1.15 Will Cwac Cwac (54064355)
1.30 Gardens Without Borders (84024176)
1.45 Film: Brothers in Law (74467006)
3.30 Collectors' Lot (805)
4.00 Fifteen-to-One (840)
4.30 Movers and Shakers (824)
5.00 5 Pump (2553)
5.30 Countdown (176)
6.00 Newydd (480331)
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8.00 On Byr A Ch Is (8737)
8.30 Newydd (7244)
9.00 Halter (8088)
11.00 Pommies (64534)
12.00 Dispatches (5015864)
12.45am Secret Lives: Billy Butlin (424916)
1.45-2.15 Natural Born Healers (29954)

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REAL TENNIS 42

Bray takes on world after British Open triumph

SPORT

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 27 1997

GOLF 45

Which aces have emerged from the card school?



England make five changes

Bentley wings back to face South Africa

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

SHOWING a dash of the unexpected which is after all, what Clive Woodward seeks from his players — England announced a team yesterday whose four changes of personnel include John Bentley. Thus Bentley, one of the folk heroes of the British Isles tour to South Africa last summer, will make his first home international appearance at Twickenham on Saturday against the Springboks.

A South Africa team, moreover, which includes James Small, with whom Bentley tangled during the Lions' game with Western Province in Cape Town last May. Accusations of eye-gouging were made, and denied, but there is no doubt that these two remain among the fiercest wings in the international game, the main difference being that no-one has made more appearances for his country than Small, with 45, while Bentley is winning only his fourth cap after a long career in rugby league.

Bentley, who won his first two caps in 1988 in Dublin and Brisbane, takes the place of Adebayo Adebayo, the one player to be dropped from the XV that performed with credit during the 25-8 defeat against New Zealand at Old Trafford last Saturday. Danny Grewcock, the Saracens lock, takes the place of Martin Johnson, who is suspended, and wins his second cap; Matt Dawson, at scrum half, and Neil Back, a flanker, win selection because Kyran Bracken and Tony Diprose suffered shoulder injuries during a hectic England training session on Tuesday afternoon. There may be a further change if Phil de Glanville fails to recover from an ankle ligament injury sustained during the same session.

If he is forced to withdraw,

the Bath centre's place will go to Nick Greenstock, of Wasps but, though change has been inflicted upon him to a marked extent, Woodward is not unhappy at bringing in fresh blood during England's gruelling series of four internationals on successive weekends. It was always the coach's intention to give Dawson an outing and he would have considered Tim Rodber for the back row had the Northampton captain not suffered concussion during an excellent display against the New Zealanders in Bristol on Tuesday. Rodber led an English Rugby Partnership XV in a

unlucky of players not to be selected for the game with Australia two weeks ago, losing out as much as anything to the Saracens combination of Diprose, Hill and Bracken.

He also has the advantage of having turned himself into a reputable goalkicker, while Paul Grayson, his club colleague, has been recovering from a pelvic injury. Kicking goals at Franklin's Gardens is one thing, kicking them in front of 73,000 spectators at Twickenham is another. After Mike Carr's failure in that department at Old Trafford, England will name their front-line kicker today.

Adebayo must be regarded as unfortunate to lose his place to Bentley, whose inclusion means that David Rees will switch to the left wing, his preferred side. Bentley struggled, along with most of his team-mates when Emerging England lost 59-22 to the New Zealanders at Huddersfield, but was far more assertive at Ashton Gate.

He has had little first-team rugby with Newcastle of late, though, and this is what he craves. "I have had discussions with Newcastle about my future and that's between me and them," he said. "I need to play first-team football, wherever I am playing. Newcastle will put out their strongest XV for the Premiership game with Gloucester on December 14 and if I'm not in, then I'll have to go elsewhere."

As far as James Small is concerned, I was disappointed with the incident in Cape Town [when Small accused him of gouging and refused to shake hands at the end of the game] but we shook hands on it later and the matter was closed. He's a fantastic player, but it may be easier to play against him than it was against Jonah Lomu.

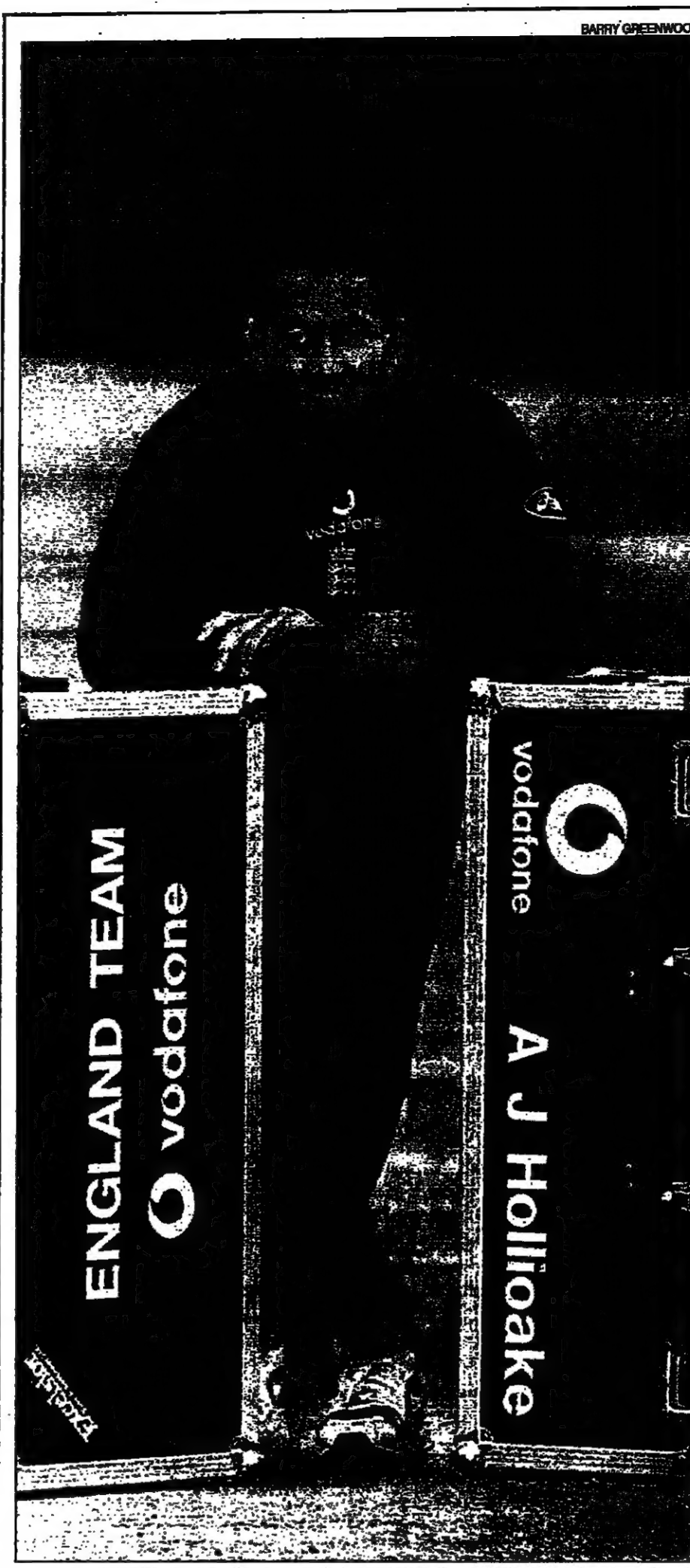
The South Africa wing, hearing England's team selection, shrugged his shoulders: "I'm not concerned with who is playing against me," he said. "I just want to play well for South Africa."

ENGLAND

M B Perry (Bath); J Bentley (Newcastle); W J H Greenwood (Leicester); P R de Glanville (Bath); D Rees (Sale); M J Carr (Bath); M J S Dawson (Northampton); J Leonard (Hartpury); R Cochrane (Leicester); D J Grewcock (Leicester); D J Grewcock (Saracens); G S Archer (Newcastle); L B N Dagglio (Wasps, captain); A N Back (Leicester); R A Hill (Gloucester); P J Grayson (Northampton); A S Huxley (Leicester); C M A Sheehy (Wasps); A N O'Leary; G C Rowntree (Leicester); M P Ragan (Bath)

rousing display at Ashton Gate, but could remember little of the 18-11 defeat and must rest for the mandatory three weeks. So, the back row will feature Richard Hill, at No 8, with Back at open-side and Lawrence Dallaglio, the captain, at blind-side flanker, though it is possible that he may move to No 8 at scrums in certain parts of the field.

It is a back row with considerable pace, though Dawson will have to work hard to establish a good relationship with Hill, who has not played at No 8 for three seasons. Dawson, who has recently been resting an ankle injury, was probably the



Adam Holford, England captain in Sharjah, is packed and raring to go

Lloyd sets out targets for busy schedule

By ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

THE ENGLAND cricketers, having had "a suitable time at home, a chance to paint the garage door", as David Lloyd, their coach, observed yesterday, must now shelve domestic chores indefinitely for the national team is about to embark on an intimidating 14-month programme containing virtually no break.

On Monday, Lloyd takes a 14-man party to Pakistan and Sharjah. After a Christmas recess the principal winter tour to West Indies will run from January 3 until the 1998 domestic season is underway. Visits by South Africa and Sri Lanka during next summer will be followed almost immediately by an Ashes tour of Australia.

It is a demanding undertaking, an itinerary that might have been designed to promote the early burnout of leading players. Lloyd is not blind to the perils but nor is he in awe of them. "We don't fear what is in front of us," he said, "but we are aware of the questions to be asked."

"We will probably need a good number of players through this period and we will need to plan carefully. I don't believe we are being asked to play too many Test matches, in fact I think the programme just keeps us ticking over. Our problem, which is well documented, concerns the domestic scene. To maintain our players at their peak, I hope the counties will keep playing ball with us if we need to rest them and keep them fresh."

This thinly veiled warning is a precursor of an inevitably recurring theme. Until England follow the lead of Australia and South Africa by centrally employing their senior players, the club and country conflict will never be satisfactorily resolved. Even the most hidebound county traditionalist need only glance at the impending workload to acknowledge that England players can no longer be expected to play a full part at domestic level.

The two months since the home season ended have been far from idle. Each member of England's tour parties has had an individual fitness programme and, in recent weeks, the squads

have spent several days in the state-of-the-art indoor nets at Old Trafford, a £1 million complex in which fast bowlers can take their full run-ups while wicket-keepers and slips stand back the required distance.

"It is a facility which is as good as any in the world," Lloyd said after yesterday's final practice session. "We have prepared as well as we can in an English winter and we are ready for the challenges ahead. Our targets are well identified. In one-day cricket, all roads lead to the 1999 World Cup, while in Test cricket it is simply to win series on a consistent basis."

Lloyd flies out to Rawalpindi today to assess the West Indies in the second Test against Pakistan. He will join his one-day party in

DETAILS

ENGLAND SQUAD (to Pakistan and Sharjah): A. Holford (Surrey, captain), A D Brown (Surrey), D R Brown (Warwickshire), R D B Croft (Gloucestershire), M A Ebdon (Kent), M V Fleming (Kent), A F Giles (Warwickshire), D W Headley (Kent), G A Hick (Worcestershire), B C Hollis (Surrey), N V Knight (Warwickshire), P J Marsh (Leicestershire), A J Stewart (Surrey), G P Thorne (Surrey).

SHARJAH ITINERARY: Dec 11: v India, Dec 13: v West Indies, Dec 15: v Pakistan, Dec 18: Final (if applicable).

Lahore next week for practice games prior to the four-nation Sharjah tournament.

It is a specialist limited-overs team, England having belatedly embraced the need for a distinctly separate approach, and it has a new captain in Adam Holford.

Michael Atherton was unavailable for this trip and speculation will continue over whether he will lead the team in the one-day section of the Caribbean tour, but neither man is keen to sound possessive.

"It is a massive honour for me and I can't wait to start," Holford said yesterday. "But I am only captain for this trip, nothing else. I have a lot of targets in the game and one of them is to prove I am good enough for the Test side. I don't want to be labelled as a one-day player. I think I have got more to offer than that."

TIMES TWO

CROSSWORD

No 1262

- ACROSS
- 1 One vowing chastity (8)

5 Complacent (4)

8 Otto —, the Iron Chancellor (8)

9 Extinct district (4)

11 Forward over length of (5)

12 Dictionary word list (7)

13 Earnestly enjoin (6)

15 Right of approach (6)

18 Level upland (7)

19 Insecure: some mountains (5)

21 Boat track: funeral party (4)

22 (Trial) closed to public (2,6)

23 Skating arena (4)

24 Automatic (reaction) (4-4)
- DOWN
- 1 Veg, a brassica (7)

2 Noosed rope (5)

3 Scene of noisy chaos (4-6)

4 Equipment: challenge for ball (6)

6 Inexplicable wonder (7)

7 Fibre direction in wood (5)

10 Make (pain) more intense (10)

14 Listen (archaic) (7)

16 Shelley's *blithe Spirit* (7)

17 Betray (to police): go to bed (4,2)

18 Strength: authority (5)

20 Railway town; sounds like workforce (5)

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Ferguson exudes confidence as quarter-finals beckon United

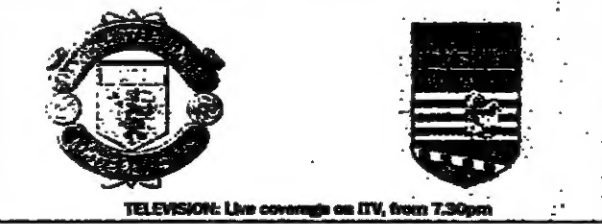
By OLIVER HOIT, FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

ALEX FERGUSON, the Manchester United manager, was making an expansive gesture with the sweep of his left hand when it brushed against one of the packed army of tape recorders lying on the desk in front of him. It fell against another and set off a chain reaction of toppling machines. "The dominoes are going down," Ferguson said with a smile.

If his Manchester United team can knock one more down tonight at Old Trafford and add a second Champions' League victory over Kosice to the others they have recorded over Feyenoord and Juventus, they will be through to the quarter-finals stage of the European Cup without needing to gain even a point from their last match of this phase in Turin in a fortnight.

As Denis Irwin publicly forgave Paul Bosvelt for his tackle in Rotterdam a fortnight ago, so Ferguson exuded the quiet confidence and bonhomie that are becoming a feature of these pre-Champions' League press conferences. He perused each of the other five groups as he talked, analysing which ones might provide a best runner-up. For once, the United manager was able to distance himself from the desperate scuffling going on among many of his rivals, secure in the knowledge that United hold their destiny in their own hands.

The odd Bosvelt tackle and Alessandro del Piero early goal apart, the progress of United in the competition this year has been serene and Ferguson took a degree of delight in contemplating the



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ordeals awaiting others of the European elite. Bayern Munich's trip to Besiktas last night caused him particular amusement. "That could be another nice quiet night in Turkey," he said.

Of the other teams, he said he had been most impressed with the performances of Real Madrid. He felt sure that both United and Juventus would qualify for the quarter-finals from group B, although such is the turnaround in the fortunes of these two that a United win in the Stadio delle Alpi might end the interest of last year's beaten finalists in the competition.

Above all, Ferguson insisted that United would concentrate on their own game and try to play the high-tempo, pressing football that has left them as the only club in the competition with a 100 per cent record. So wrapped up in his own team was he, in fact, that at one point he started talking about "tomorrow night's game against Sparta Prague".

So irresistible have United been in recent matches,

But tonight, with Ronnie Johnson likely to displace Gary Pallister in defence, has quickly become a pivotal part of one of the youngest sides in the competition, one that Ferguson feels is now eminently equipped to win the trophy that has become his obsession.

"Scholes is not fazed by anything," Ferguson said. "It does not matter to him what sort of game he is playing in. On Saturday, we started him off playing deep and his distribution was marvellous. When we moved him forward, he adapted straight away. He was easily our best player. Who will take any penalties tomorrow night? Scholes could take them, I suppose."

"The way this team is playing, they are that much better equipped to win the competition than last year. I have said all the way through that we must score in every game and we are doing that. Just think of the Dortmund game here last season. My players must have been kicking themselves that night. They must have been lying in their beds twisting in pain over what happened — well, at least, I hope they were, because it served them right."

"Our game-plan will stay the same, just the way we have been playing in the league. We will try to operate at a very quick tempo. It is the only way for us to go in this game. We will have to be aware of the counter-attack and of what happened to us against Fenerbahce last season, when we relaxed the pace. That will not happen again."

MANCHESTER UNITED (4-2-3-1): P. Scholes, G. Pallister, R. Johnson, M. Barnes, P. Neville — D. Beckham, N. Butt, P. Scholes, R. Keane — E. Shefferson, A. Cole, P. Keane, D. S. D. L. Moore — A. Tait, I. Konecny, P. Clark — M. Spill, M. Bowe, V. Zizic, M. Bochicic, R. Keane — P. Scholes, J. Keane.

had been most impressed with the performances of Real Madrid. He felt sure that both United and Juventus would qualify for the quarter-finals from group B, although such a result surprised him.

Ferguson admitted yesterday might be back in football by the end of this season after surgery to repair cruciate ligament damage.

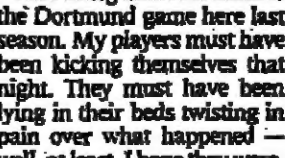
Scholes, who will partner

*not including last night's match

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Ferguson: analysis

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